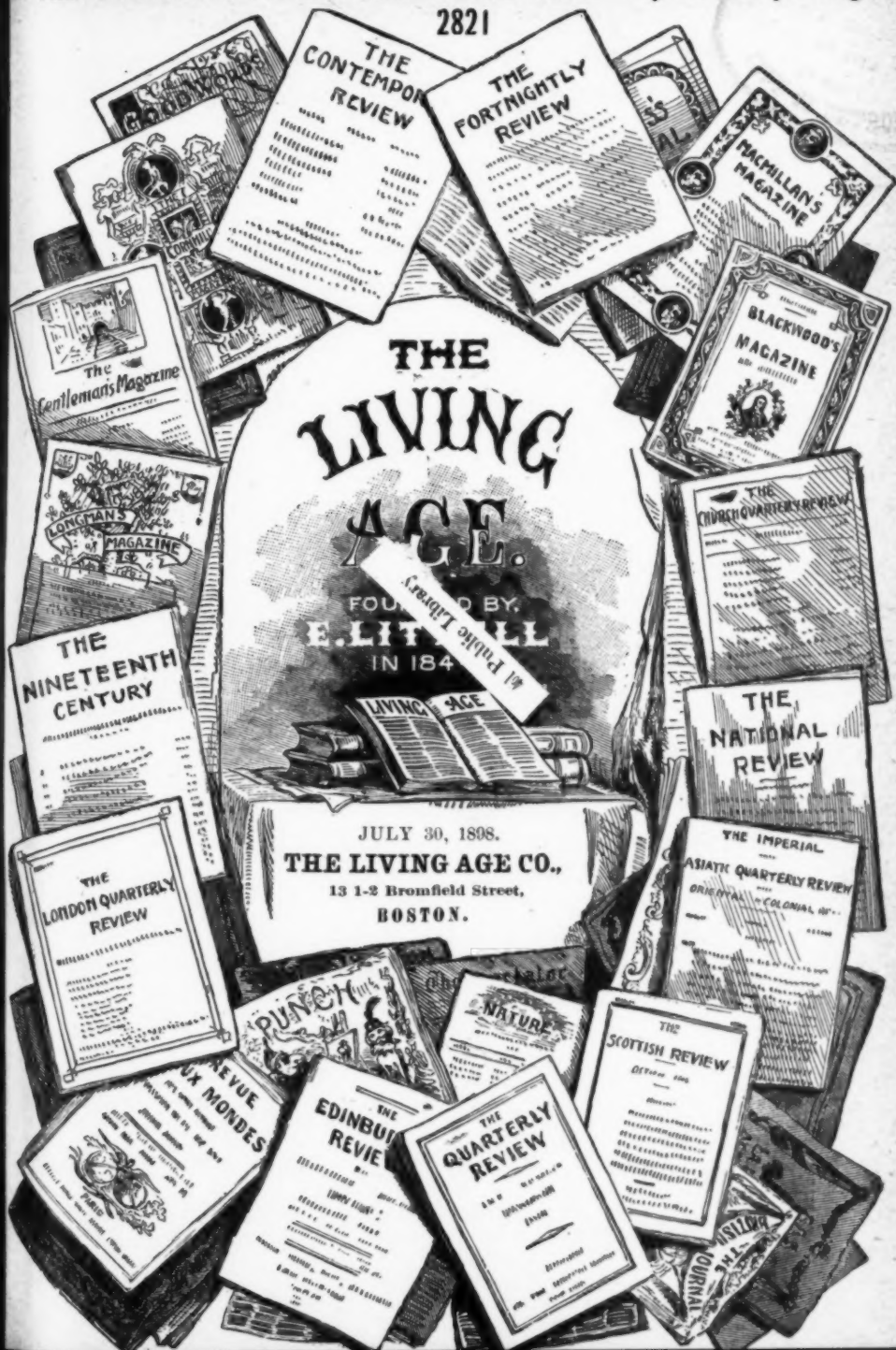


THE THEATRE IN ITS RELATION TO THE STATE—By Sir Henry Irving.
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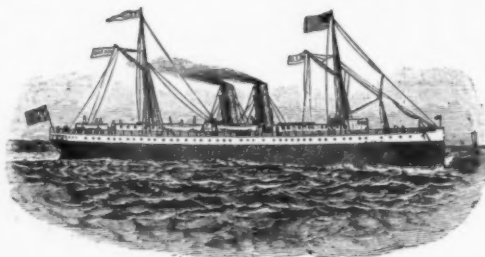
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THE HAUNTED CITY.

Some heart's remembrance and regret
 Fill every street with life profound;
 This corner where of old we met
 To me has since been hallowed ground;
 I never pass in sun or rain
 Now but I meet you here again.

We cannot go from where we dwell
 And leave behind no lingering trace;
 Where in the past our shadow fell
 A shadow of us haunts the place;
 Returning now, ourselves may there
 Disturb some ghost of what we were.

The stones are thrilled by many a tread
 That leaves no footprint where it
 strays;
 Shades of the living and the dead
 In silence throng the noisy ways:
 Here where I meet in shower or shine
 Your ghost, you haply meet with mine.

The air has sounds we cannot hear,
 Is dim with space that none can see;
 Tho' dear the living voice, and dear
 The sight of living faces be,
 With kindlier yearnings yet we greet
 The friends we see not when we meet.
 Spectator. A. ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

TO M. E. H.

When you wake in your crib—
 You, an inch of experience—
 Vaulted about
 With the wonder of darkness;
 Wailing and striving
 To reach from your feebleness
 Something you feel
 Will be good to and cherish you,
 Something you know
 And can rest upon blindly:
 O, then a hand,
 (Your mother's, your mother's)
 By the fall of its fingers
 All knowledge, all power to you,
 Out of the dreary,
 Discouraging strangenesses
 Comes to and masters you,
 Takes you, and lovingly
 Woos you and soothes you
 Back, as you cling to it,
 Back to some comforting
 Corner of sleep.

So you wake in your bed,
 Having lived, having loved;
 But the shadows are there,
 And the world and its kingdoms
 Incredibly faded;
 And you grope through the terror
 Above you and under
 For the light, for the warmth,
 The assurance of life;
 But the blasts are ice-born,
 And your heart is nigh burst
 With the weight of the gloom
 And the stress of your strangled
 And desperate endeavor.
 Sudden a hand—
 Mother, O mother!—
 God at His best to you,
 Out of the roaring,
 Impossible silences
 Falls on and urges you,
 Mightily, tenderly,
 Forth, as you clutch at it,
 Forth to the infinite
 Peace of the grave.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY.

LOVE'S LIFE.

Spirit with the mystic charm
 Far from mortal help or harm,
 That can never fade nor die
 In any mist of memory;

Spirit with the unnumbered voice
 That can bid me weep, rejoice,
 That can compass in its span
 All that's woman, all that's man;

Spirit with the golden heart
 That must ever dwell apart,
 Yet can never scorn to know
 Mortals' weal and mortals' woe:

Lady, who with truth of steel
 Truth's deceptions canst reveal,
 Let all baser doubtings be.
 Find the heart of truth in me!

This the lesson thou dost teach,
 Wakening silence into speech:
Truth may waver, truth may die,
Love is Immortality!

WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK
 Longman's Magazine.

From *The Fortnightly Review*.
THE THEATRE IN ITS RELATION TO
THE STATE.¹

In a well-organized community everything has its purpose and its place, and the whirligig of times gives, in the average, to each its proper value and importance. Thus the record of any specific institution is in miniature the life, or at least the reflex of the life, of the community. So it is, that as a nation grows in power it must grow in wisdom; or else the garden of its prosperity must lack those flowers of advancement and security which have their roots in content, and which are watered by hope.

Now, in a university—whose educational process should be as truthful in quality as it is wide in range—when we discuss any matter, we must do so with an equal mind. We must, when considering abstract propositions, no matter how their working out may be hedged in with practical difficulties, recognize the principles of the greatest, and the final, utility. Remember that if premises are correct and argument be exact, what ought to be is the sure forerunner of what is. The wise and noble words of Polonius in his exordium to his son setting forth to battle with the world have a larger significance than may be taken in a play, or even regarding the narrow environment of the father's view:—

To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

I have been compelled to lay stress on exactness, because I am about to deal with a theme which is now and again subject to violent and unreasoning attacks, chiefly from a class of persons with whom morality has the proportions of an exact science, and to whom toleration should be a final goal of intellectual ambition. Lessons of history should give to thinking people ground for thought. "It is the germ of the future which we seek in the past," and if I venture to call your attention

¹ The Rede Lecture, delivered at Cambridge, Wednesday, June 15th.

to a few isolated matters of recorded history, without pretending for an instant to connect them in any way, I trust that you will not take me as even attempting to suggest an historical narrative, but only as illustrating my theme with indisputable facts.

The same word, "theatre," having been used continuously as designating places of amusement and illustration from ancient to modern times, and under conditions of infinitely varying width, so as to render impossible comparison as to aim, scope or effort, must of course be held responsible for much of the prejudice which exists in many places. What, for instance, can be held, in the moral aspect of the case, to be in common between the theatre of Pagan Rome, where blood and lust and extravagant pandering to the worse vices of humanity were the memorable features, and the Elizabethan "theatre," where the grave simplicity of the general audience was marked by the exceptional laughter of "some quantity of barren spectators"? Or, further, what has it in common with those well-regulated theatres of to-day—supported in some of the most enlightened of foreign countries in part by State, and maintained amongst English-speaking peoples by purely individual effort? Nay, further still, what is there in common with the lecture-halls of universities, of colleges and teaching institutions, which still bear the generic name of "theatre?" For all practical purposes we may take the word "theatre" in its popular significance as a play-house—a specially-arranged place for the representation of the drama. By drama I mean drama as I hold it to be, the simulation of life in whatever aspect it may be taken—serious, or humorous, or satirical; but not the mere amusing displays of personal gifts, which to-day are so prominent a feature in the relaxation of the people.

From your watch-tower of learning you can watch with unprejudiced eyes the relative forces of education in travail, and see action and reaction each doing its share in the great work of

the furtherance of humanity. You can afford to theorize. Men and communities not so effectively isolated from some of the worries and labors of strenuous life, may find their aspirations baffled and their moderated efforts crippled by their surroundings. But you can theorize to the full. The past and the present and the future are all elements in the consideration of what ought to be. Nay, the present, which is after all but a moving panorama before our eyes, and the past, which is but the dim shadow of humanity thrown backward by the eternal sunlight, are of lesser importance than the illimitable future which stretches before us, and which is in some degree, however slight, to be moulded by our own efforts.

When the dumb Hour, clothed in black,
Brings the dreams about my bed,
Call me not so often back,
Silent Voices of the Dead,
Toward the lowland ways behind me,
And the sunlight that is gone!
Call me rather, silent voices,
Forward to the starry track
Glimmering up the heights beyond me,
On, and always on!

Whatever institution is of collateral if not direct good should be at least acknowledged as a factor of beneficence to the commonweal; and in the history of the country we find that, in the main, this is so. Little by little—sometimes, alas! by very slow and short stages indeed—legislation throws a protecting arm around such, and even compels or enables the whole community to aid an effort specifically. It is thus that the Royal Academy of Art obtained its charter, and later a local habitation by a grant of public money considered at the time enormous. It is thus that the British Museum and the Department of Science and Art and the growth of the National Gallery have been fostered. Indeed, the plastic arts are, up to the present time, fairly well cared for. It is thus that throughout the length and breadth of the land libraries have been, and are being, erected by the

means of public moneys locally collected. Many of us can remember a time when a great section of the public held that high education would debase and disorganize the masses—indeed, the creation of the School Board system was against strenuous opposition. Even now are to be found very many who hold that any education in the graces of life given in the schools of the poorer classes will have a maleficent effect. But such ideas pass in good time into the limbo of forgotten things. Sometimes when we look back, even at the history of our own time, we wonder how such narrow ideas could have ever had an existence, much less a force. We find, then, this general tendency to increase in many ways the sweetness of life, to relieve its dulness, and lift the minds of the people from the sordid realities of life.

The aim and purpose of the drama is to cultivate the imagination, and through this means to bring home to heart and mind the lessons which tend to advance the race. Imagination is one of the most potent factors of human progress. It stimulates effort; it enlarges the bounds of thought; it creates for the individual new realms of possibility; it clears away the intellectual mists of sordid reality; it harmonizes the seeming divergences in the great scheme of creation; it reconciles, by its restful change, poor humanity to the wearisome details of life; it brightens, invigorates and freshens the jaded faculties. To the suffering it brings anodyne to pain; for the weary it creates possibilities of rest and repose; to the vigorous it affords a healthy and noble stimulation, generous in aim, immeasurable in scope and myriad in detail. Surely in the well-being of a nation all that tends to such a wholesome and useful end is of prime importance. Life on its practical side is, under the best of circumstances, so hard, so full of dangers, so restless in its demands of work to fulfil the ends of need or ambition, that the addition of grace and beauty and the serenity that comes

from happiness are excellencies of unapproachable worth. In the ever-widening efforts of beneficent government such ends should be, and in the main are, borne in mind; and perhaps the greatest evidences of the civic advance of our time are afforded by the rise and multiplication of works which aid and encourage thought and grace and sweetness. The sweeping advance of science seems to open men's eyes to the many benefits of art; and the wide-spreading knowledge of art seems to shed its own enlightenment on the progressive needs of life, whence the discoveries of science have mainly their source. You here, in a university whose very name implies a recognition of all branches of knowledge, must rejoice when you think of the progress of humanity, which, though eternal, moves faster with the passing of the years.

The theatre must always be an indirect mechanism of teaching. Its work must be in the main transcendental: for mere realism is insufficient to stimulate the imagination or to rouse the sensibilities or the emotions. Now, in order to effect its object, the theatre must be a piece of very complete and elaborate organization. In fact, an inner knowledge of its working shows it to be one of the most difficult and varied pieces of mechanism of which human effort is capable. The mere study of the necessities and resources of theatre art—the art of illusion—should give the theatre as an educational medium a proper place in State economy. Just think for a moment: a comprehensive art effort which consolidates into one entity, which has an end and object and purpose of its own, all the elements of which any or all of the arts and industries take cognizance—thought, speech, passion, humor, pathos, emotion, distance, substance, form, size, color, time, force, light, illusion to each or all of the senses, sound, tone, rhythm, music, motion. Can such a work be undertaken lightly or with inadequate preparation? Why, the mere patience necessary for the production of a play

might take a high place in the marvels of human effort. Remember, I am not speaking now of the art of acting; for this art alone, which is, after all, the purpose of the playhouse, is one *sui generis*, and which requires the labor of years to master. Surely a medium of education such as this, whose end—unless we accept the dictum, that to arouse emotion without the exercise of corresponding effort is immoral—is the training of the sterner and loftier and rarer emotions and passions of men, and which in its own doing necessitates thought, study, constant and unvarying labor and self-devotion, should have fitting recognition. It is hardly sufficient that in the economy of the State such exercises with their economic difficulties should be left entirely to the chance of personal enterprise. To cultivate sympathy—that sweetener of the toils and troubles of life—that high-souled helpmate of endeavor; to widen the understanding of it; to train the minds of the young to its beneficial exercise, and to stimulate in all high and unselfish feeling, is a good office in the government of men. And for this end I say the theatre ever makes.

When we come to think that co-existent with all great public movements have been great waves of imaginative effort, we can well understand that action and sentiment—which is a child of imagination—are closely correlated. With the waking of England at the close of the sixteenth century, when her exploring ships opened up new worlds, and her merchants and her adventurers swept the known and the unknown seas, adding to the national as well as the individual wealth, and enlarging the bounds of the national domain, came the rise of her artistic cult, beginning with one of its greatest glories, the rise of the drama—the work of Shakespeare; for Shakespeare's work was not only literary, it was done for the stage. With civil dissension came cessation of imaginative work of the highest kind, until, the turmoil of party strife abating, political satire was followed by efforts of

pure imagination—by the ever-growing importance of art and art methods—by the rise of the novel and the recrudescence of the stage. From then till now the increase has been perpetual; art of every kind has flourished. New arts and new phases or developments of art have arisen. Painting and sculpture, whose products a century ago were represented by scores, are now numbered by thousands. Music has increased throughout the country in every conceivable phase. There are many great musical academies and a Royal College of Music. Sculpture in many and varied forms seems to have restored some of the glories of the past, and there is manifest an ever-widening possibility of materials for the sculptor's art. Architecture in its domestic aspect has become a new art, and houses of to-day show sometimes the extraordinary advance from the crude utility of even a few years ago. Even the handicrafts which follow on higher artistic effort have developed to an immense degree; and the beauties of interior decoration in both form and color—of furniture, papers, glass, plate, china, and all the paraphernalia of domestic life—are apparent to all. The beauty of books, printing and binding, have wonderfully increased. Even the conventions of dress have been enlarged, and there are, throughout the varying fashions, possibilities of individual taste which were unknown in a less liberal age. As to the development of literature, your librarians can tell best of that, with their groans concerning overlaid shelves and their entreaties for more space by which to cope with the increasing rush of volumes. Even granting that a large proportion of the works published are not of greatest worth, the residue is a noble tribute to the zeal and taste, the brains and energy, of the race; and when we think that of the large proportion of those works which are of a purely imaginative kind, we may well accept the manifest conclusion that imagination plays no little part in the life, the history and the development of mankind.

In the midst of these many developments of specific art let us see how has fared the one institution which makes use of them all—the theatre. We shall, I think, find that through good and ill it has held its place, and can show as high a ratio of progress as anything else in the State. As a practical working institution the theatre in England dates from the time of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. And in that age we find by analogy its place fairly marked by the records of the statute book and the royal ordinances. There is a common idea that actors are by law considered as vagabonds, the historic basis being a contemplation of the statutes regarding vagrancy. These statutes, crude and general in terms as were all or most of the early enactments, having been made and renewed between the twenty-third year of Edward III. and the fifth year of Queen Elizabeth, were variously repealed and consolidated in 1572, the Act being the 14th Elizabeth, Chapter 5. In this Act, strolling players unlicensed are certainly classed among "rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars," who are in the preamble of the Act termed "outrageous enemies to the common weal," the penalty on conviction being "that then immediately he or she shall be adjudged to be grievously whipped, and burnt through the gristle of the right ear with a hot yron of the compasse of an inch about," a punishment only to be abated by some responsible household taking him, or her, into service for a full year under proper recognition. A second offence became a felony. The clause of the Act "expressing what person and persons shall bee so extended within this branch to be rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars" includes the following: "Pretended proctors, gamesters, persons 'faining themselves to have knowledge in phisnomie, palmestrie, or other abused sciences,' quasi-laborers who will not work, unlicensed jugglers, pedlars, tinkers, petty chapmen, counterfeitours and users of licenses and passports, shipmen pretending

losses at sea." The following inclusion deals directly with the subject of actors: "All fencers, beare wardes, common players in interludes, and minstrels, not belonging to any baron of the realme, or towards any honorable personage of greater degree . . . which shall wander abroad and have not licenses of two Justices of the Peace of the least, whereof one bee of the quorum, where and in what shire they shall happen to wander."

This certainly marks an epoch and has a distinct bearing upon what has become lately a sort of shibboleth, "the social status of the actor," of the time. It must, however, be remembered that at that period communities were small and constables few, and any incursion of a body of unaccredited persons was apt to create alarm, even if not in itself a real element of danger. At that time, too, actors complying with existing regulations had a secure position of their own. The countenance of the court was given to players who were then, as now, under the jurisdiction of the lord chamberlain, and, as is noticeable, the protection of a great lord saved the strolling players from the odium of arrest, with its grievous penalties, those only being liable who avoided fulfilling the conditions laid down by the law. It must also be remembered that in all the Sumptuary Statutes "players in their interludes" were exempt from the penalties of wearing clothes out of their degree. All things are, however, relative, and a better illustration can hardly be taken of the real meaning of the vagrant classification of the statutes—certainly one which will come home to you who belong to this great university, which then, as now, basked in the full sun of national honor—than another item in the category of "rogues, vagabonds and sturdie beggars" laid down in the Act:—

All schollers of the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge that go about begging, not being authorized under the seale of the said universities by the commissarie, chancellor, or vice-chancellor, of the same,

Gentlemen, you will note that if the Elizabethan player on tour had to submit to dangers and indignities that compete with the modern perils of railway travel and undisciplined hotel service, he was not alone in his trial. Then—as I have the honor to do today—the player kept company with the scholar. Well, the times have changed. Under more favorable social conditions the scholar and the player alike may now follow their bent under less harrowing circumstances than then obtained. When, however, laws fall into desuetude, they may often hang on unrepealed. "What is everyone's business is no one's business," and though the vagrant conditions of the players were so changed that they themselves did not even know their legal obligations regarding travelling license, the craft was preserved in "the rogues' category" at each renewal of the Vagrant Act until well into the present century, when some Parliamentary draughtsman, less hidebound than his predecessors, discreetly drew his pen through the obsolete clause. In this respect the scholar, more in touch with legislation than the player, had long before achieved the same result.

The growth of the theatre as an acknowledged institution in the State kept, in some degree, pace with the onward movement of the eighteenth century. Personal violence towards actors offending individual susceptibilities became superseded by statutory regulation and redress. Thus the cudgelling of a player by an offended Minister of State was followed by the Act of 1736 (10 George II., Cap. 28), which appears under a ponderous title: "An Act to explain and Amend so much of an Act made in the Twelfth year of *Queen Anne*, intituled 'An Act for reducing the Laws relating to Rogues, Vagabonds, Sturdie Beggars and Vagrants, and sending them whither they ought to be sent,' as relates to Common Players of Interludes."

This Act, which formally recognized the existence of proper theatres, pro-

vided for the licensing of plays and regulated the responsibilities of actors, held the statute book for more than a century. It was superseded, and its material provisions were embodied in the Act of 1843 (6 and 7 Victoria, Cap. 68), which is still in force.

The above-mentioned legislation is not to be confused with the legislation affecting music halls, which began in 1747 (25 George II., Cap. 36), and has run on widely different lines from legislation regarding theatres proper up to the present time.

Still, this legal consideration has been rather repressive than helpful, and the most that can be said is that the State, up to now, has, at the best, been indifferent. It reminds one of the prayer of the sailor alone on an ice floe with a bear, when the moment for the joining issue had come: "Lord, if you don't help me, don't help the bear!" The general result has been that the theatre, unaided in any way, has worked out its own destiny. That this has worthily followed, where it did not lead, the advance of public enlightenment is shown by successive acts. For instance, Garrick relegated to the street the rowdiness of the footmen's gallery, while other public or quasi-public places long afterwards tolerated the nuisance. Macready abolished the promenade in his theatre, thus purging the playhouse from an evil which has continued to exist in other places to this day. As to the tone of the acted drama, this has always been more or less guided by the public taste. "The drama's laws the drama's patrons give," is a forceful, if meagre, statement of a fact—it being always borne in mind that there are always several parties to the growth of public opinion, and that in their clashing is found the dynamic element of advance. The playhouse has often been the arena of the strife of public sentiments, and its changes the resultant of opposing forces. For instance, the libertine freedom of the court, which had produced the effort, received a rebuff from the body of an audience when a comedy of Mrs.

Aphra Behn, with the ever popular Nell Gwynne, was hissed off the stage on the first night of its production. In our history we have read of books having been burned by the common hangman just as the author was pilloried; and the history of an unworthy play shows an analogy. The justice of the public is swift and strong. In fine, the theatre must ever be to a very great degree the reflex of the life of the people—so long, at least, as nature keeps within her accustomed course. For its efforts must run parallel to the workings of human life and human needs—ambitions, hopes, fears and passions. Oliver Wendell Holmes says: "Philosophers may argue how they will, but two things they cannot argue away—the blood in men's veins, and the milk in women's breasts."

I before hinted at a limitation of the drama in the sense in which I have used it, so that in speaking of the theatre proper as the home of the drama, it must be understood that I limit the use of the word accordingly. Although the purpose of the individual in the enterprise of any one theatre may be to amuse the public, and in such a way as to advance the prosperity of the adventurer, the purpose of the theatre in the abstract is not so restricted. The purpose of things has many aspects, and though the range of one who holds some part in it may be limited, the consensus of outlook embraces the world. The lessons of life are not always didactic, and perhaps the most patent are those which are not formulated in books or taught in schools. Human nature is so constituted that it has inherent the natural elements of logic—an understanding of the laws of cause and effect—and when once the premises are set forth, the result is pretty sure to be adequately arrived at. Experience is largely the teacher of complex matters, and as the opportunities of civilization and the serenity of domestic life do not usually allow of the experience of the more rugged and dominating passions of our nature—which are nevertheless latently exist-

ing—it is wise in the economy of things that a fitting knowledge of evil potentialities as well as good should be afforded. Warning-posts have their place as well as sign-posts in the many cross-roaded highways of life. Nevertheless, questions of the passions should in all imaginative work be very carefully dealt with, and it is here that we may fear for the effects of that luxuriant and reckless quasi-realism at which certain imaginative writers—both for the stage and the library—aim. Questions of taste and decorum are perhaps more closely interlocked with morality and State prudence than would be at once admitted by the determined sweeper-away of landmarks. As one of the most expeditious of lesson carriers, the theatre should be subject to all wise restraints; for evil as well as good has its machinery of advance. The wisdom of many governments has enacted laws and made regulations for the general good. Books and pictures, songs and photographs, in fact every phase of imaginative and imitative effort, are subject to certain restraints. The operations of police discipline will always be necessary amongst the children of Adam. I mention this phase of the question lest anyone should think that I wish to set forth that, in an imperfect world, where fallibility is almost of the essence of things, there is only one perfect institution—the theatre. I simply wish to convey the idea that the reflex of human life is not, and does not require to be, more perfect than its archetype—that the mirror picture would not be true were it not to set forth the faults of the original. I claim for the theatre no exemption from the failings of any organized effort. I wish no exemption from the operation of those laws of restraint wisely ordained for the common good; but I do claim for the theatre that it may be, and is, a potent means of teaching great truths and furthering the spread of education of the higher kind—the knowledge of the scope and working of human character.

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,

The proper study of Mankind is Man."

In fine, I venture to assert that whereas the State should exercise an influence, ranging between control and aid, on all matters which have an indirect, as well as those having a direct, bearing on its welfare and its progress, it should be even jealously mindful for the true good of those institutions which have power to touch the hearts of the people—to hold their sentiments, to awaken and stimulate their imagination; and so to aid in turning lofty thoughts into acts of equal worth.

In this category the theatre is an item of vast potentialities—a natural evolution of the needs and thoughts and wishes of the people—an institution which has progressed for good unaided by the State, and which in future should distinctly be in some degree encouraged by the State or by municipalities. How exactly this is to be accomplished remains to be seen; but if this I am sure, that the grave consideration of such questions as these in such a place as this is the forerunner of their ultimate settlement. What should be is ever the sure-footed forerunner of what is. Remember, I pray you, that you must no more judge an institution as to its final utility so long as it is existing under adverse or inadequate conditions than you should take an ill-reared or ignorant child as a type of the highest culture of which humanity is capable. Man, though made in the image of his Maker, is compact of many neutralising excellencies and defects, and we must not expect from the kaleidoscopic groupings of such imperfect items a flawless work. As the theatre must deal with the eternal conditions of humanity, so must it ever have weaknesses which result from human imperfection. But as humanity has its nobler part, so too the theatre has capabilities of good which are as illimitable as the progress of man.

HENRY IRVING.

From The Pall Mall Magazine.

NAVAL PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED IN THE WAR.

The tools we handle now are far keener than any hitherto employed, the ends to be obtained are of vital worth; and I venture to predict that the successful side will be that on which the admirals and captains do not hesitate to employ the ships and boats in the way that leads most surely to the disablement of their opponents, without being unduly deterred by sentiment or by risks.

COMMANDER R. H. BACON, R. N.

The second naval war within five years is upon us. Once more the machines which the ingenuity of man has invented for the purpose of destroying man are to be tested in action—are actually being tested whilst these lines are in the writing. And not the machines only, but also the men who handle them. The Latin and the Anglo-Saxon, so often in conflict in the past, are meeting once more in battle; and issues the most momentous hang upon the conduct of the combatants. The war between the United States and Spain is a copy on a very reduced scale, and with some slight modifications, of a war between England and France. It is not my purpose in this article to work out a detailed comparison; I can only suggest it. The great British superiority in battleships and unarmored cruisers as against France is faithfully reproduced in the American navy as against Spain. The great French advantage in armored cruisers finds its parallel in the Spanish navy. Even in torpedo craft the numerical equality which exists between England and France is repeated with some correctness in the two combatant navies.

Thus all conditions are favorable to a trial of our race; upon the conduct of Admiral Sampson and Commodore Schley's officers and bluejackets depends not merely the honor of the United States, but the very existence of the British Empire. If the men who are hourly expecting battle in the Caribbean falter, if they show any want of courage or sailormanship—

which God forbid—then let us be certain that an attack will be delivered upon England by her enemies, who will conclude, and not unjustly, that the military qualities of the Anglo-Saxon have declined under the depressing burden of civilization. And as this is the greatest problem to be settled in the war, so we shall hope and pray that our race may emerge with glory from the test.

In yet another curious respect the circumstances of a war between England and France are represented. England, like the United States, mans her navy by voluntary enlistment, and has an exceedingly small trained reserve. France, like Spain, employs compulsory service, and has a large reserve. But here an element of difference comes in, for whereas the English peace-service force far outnumbers the French, the American—without any real reserve—is greatly outnumbered by the Spanish. There has been much debate as to the use of untrained men in naval wars. Great light on this most burning question should be afforded by the present struggle, for one-fourth or so of the men who take the American fleets to sea must be untrained.

It is not that the untrained man is necessarily a coward—though discipline is a tremendous force to give courage. But he is not enough of a machine; he has not learnt to repeat the movements, we will say of the breech-lever, automatically under the stress of novel and terrible experiences. A well-trained gun crew will hold together, as the history of our navy shows, till the men are shot to pulp or the ship is sunk. But where there are only one or two trained men in the detachment, and these are killed early, as they may always be, the untrained man does not know his work and is apt to be seized with panic. More happens in naval battles than gets into the books. At times we catch a dim glimpse, through the smoke and heat of action, of miserable fugitives hiding in the hold, and only driven to the guns by the flat of the officers' swords.

But it is, after all, upon the construc-

tion and value of our war-machines that we expect most light to be shed. Naval science has been revolutionized since Lissa and the Civil War; and even then there were no purely naval actions worth studying. In the China-Japan war the conditions were unfavorable for any striking deductions, as the Japanese against the Chinaman was much as a man against a child in arms, and neither side possessed powerful modern armored ships.

The warship of our own day, be she battleship, monitor, cruiser, or torpedo-boat, is an experimental craft. She has not had to undergo the prolonged and severe practical tests which removed "freak-ships" from our line-of-battle or navy list in the old three-decker days. The progress of navalscience during the last fifty years has been so rapid that the experience acquired with one kind of ship in one war becomes useless in the next, because the kind of ship has changed. By "experience," I should say, I mean experience in regard to details of construction and tactics, not in regard to the broad principles of strategy, which are unchanged and unchanging.

The first great problem to be decided is the value of the battleship against the armored cruiser and of the large armored against the large unarmored ship. If put less technically, the question is this—which is the more valuable factor, speed, or armor combined with heavy guns? The battleship is a huge structure, thickly plated with steel on her most vital parts, carrying immense guns in heavily armored turrets, but is usually of comparatively low speed. The armored cruiser, on the other hand, has much less armor—both in area covered and in thickness of plating on that area; her heavy guns are fewer in number and weaker in power, though in her quick-firing armament she is generally much the same as the battleship. As compensation for these points of weakness she has a speed of from three to five knots greater than the battleship.

The want of heavy guns in the armored cruiser is not quite so serious

as it might seem. It is perfectly possible that the battleship's monster pieces, with their ponderous turrets, moved by hydraulic or electric power, will at an early stage in the action be disabled. Hydraulic and electric machinery is notoriously delicate, and is deranged with the utmost ease. It is rare for a battleship to go to target practice with her heavy guns without some slight hitch occurring. What it would be when the enemy were firing at her, when her pipes and wires were exposed, not merely to the concussion and shock of her own heavy weapons, but also to the far more dangerous explosion of the enemy's projectiles inside her hull, may be guessed. And though every precaution which human foresight can suggest has been taken to protect these pipes and wires and the machinery they work, it is far from certain that any armor or any protection can secure them against the tremendous shock caused by the huge projectiles of modern guns. The Spanish eleven-inch breechloader, as mounted in several of Spain's armored cruisers, strikes with a force sufficient to lift the "Indiana" two and a half feet in the air.

At the Yalu there were several breakdowns of heavy guns in action, though there the shooting on either side was bad and the test was not so severe as it might be expected to be in a battle between three or four American battleships and the Spanish armored cruisers. At the bombardment of Alexandria the firing of the heavy English guns was intolerably slow—due probably to the great difficulty of working them in the face of constant small accidents. And quite lately, when a charge of powder prematurely exploded in the turret of the Russian "Sissol Vellki," it is significant that the turret was hopelessly jammed and the turning machinery disabled, so that one-half the ship's heavy armament was put out of action.

A further question which might be raised is the accurate shooting of these big weapons in action. I have watched target practice in a turret on board a British ship, and what happens is this.

The captain of the gun or turret at the sighting-hood has his two hands on two wheels. One elevates the gun; the other "traverses" or revolves the turret. When he has his sights on the target and the roll is favorable, as he has not a third hand he gives the word, "Fire," to a second man. The latter presses the firing key, and "off she goes." But giving the word and pressing the key occupy a fractional period of time, sufficient to cause error. And since, with the heavy gun, the fire is not almost continuous, as it is with the smaller quick-firers, which will sometimes have twelve projectiles—or so it is said—in the air at once, corrections are not so easily made. It is a ludicrous fact that three enormous sixty-six-ton guns of the newest pattern, which the Japanese had at the Yalu, hit nothing. Had their weight of quick-firers been carried there would certainly have been more to show. At target practice in our British Mediterranean fleet the average for the big weapons is one hit for every five rounds fired.

So far my argument tells rather against the battleship, for, when the heavy guns are subtracted, the armored cruiser and battleship are much the same in gun-power. But now comes the point that the heavy gun, useless though it may possibly be, produces a certain moral effect on the combatants, and this was why the Japanese had these big weapons mounted in their cruisers. It is difficult at sea to get men to stand up to the enemy if they feel that he has a weapon which they do not possess, just as it is difficult on land to hold infantry steady under artillery fire, when they have no batteries firing in their support. Moreover, the battleship, in virtue of her armor, is less vulnerable than the armored cruiser. This is a further cause of moral confidence in the battleship's crew. And, as victory depends quite as much upon the men as upon the machines, as a confident crew is scarcely likely to be beaten, the case now stands in favor of the battleship.

One more great advantage the latter

has. Though she cannot determine the conditions of battle, force an action, or close-in to torpedo range, if she can sufficiently injure her enemy to destroy her advantage in speed, she is morally certain of victory. The inferior protection of the armored cruiser makes her helpless at close quarters.

Still the high speed and mobility of the armored cruiser render her a type to be feared, and a type which is being widely built. The line which separates her from the battleship is vanishing, and the two classes are more and more shading off into one. The older type of battleship, such as the "Iowa" or "Indiana," requires to be accompanied by high-speed cruisers, either armored or unarmored, as without these she could not bring fast enemies to action.

One reason for the increased importance attached to speed is undoubtedly the development of the torpedo boat. Originally this was a small launch of fifteen or sixteen knots, equipped with a charge of explosive carried on a long spar. With such machinery Cushing sank the "Albemarle" in 1864. The old launch was very unseaworthy, could scarcely be lived in, and had in action to steam right up to the enemy. As against this she had to face no quick-firing guns. But the modern torpedo boat or destroyer steams from twenty-two to twenty-five knots in calm weather at sea; in bad weather can live, but is exceedingly uncomfortable; and need not come nearer than three hundred yards from her enemy. She uses the automobile torpedo, which runs thirty-one knots and can sink the finest ship afloat in a minute. No such weapon existed in the wars of the past, for the fireship had little or none of the deadliness and insidiousness of these horrible hornets of the sea.

The constant improvement of the torpedo, and the growing perfection of the sea-keeping torpedo boat, as represented by the destroyer, are profoundly influencing our ideas of naval war. Admiral Colomb, one of the most capable of our tacticians, holds that the battleship is already doomed. Her value, if expended on destroyers, would pro-

vide from fifteen to twenty of these craft good for twenty-five knots. As her own sea speed could not exceed fourteen or fifteen knots, she could by no possibility escape from these enemies, and then her existence depends on the question whether she can sink them all before they come to close quarters. If not, she goes to the bottom.

The problem cannot be tested on this wholesale scale, because neither Spain nor the United States has enough destroyers or torpedo boats. But it is almost certain that the most valuable results will be obtained. Each side has a fair flotilla—the United States in several new and good boats, Spain in her seven destroyers. Each side is certain to employ its small craft against the other's big ships.

In maneuvers, torpedo attacks are rehearsed by most navies, except the British, which has for some years unaccountably neglected them. But, owing to the impossibility of reproducing the actual conditions of war, artificial rules have been introduced, mainly operating against the torpedo boat. Commander Bacon, of our navy, one of the most practical torpedo experts of the day, and at the same time a brilliant and incisive writer, considers that "we are absolutely in the dark" on the question whether a single torpedo boat can torpedo a single ship. He gives the boat an even chance, and therefore concludes that with a large number of boats the odds grow against the ship. Of course both his premises and conclusion are open to attack, but this is at least the opinion of an able officer.

Compare the conditions of maneuvers with those of war—so far as we can imagine them—and the worthlessness of maneuver results will be seen. Several ships are at anchor in an open anchorage: it is night, and they have been warned that an attack will take place. Suddenly, about 2 A. M., the peculiar white bow wave of a torpedo boat is made out, a mile away. The umpires take out their watches, the guns fire at the approaching white mark for two minutes, and the boat is ruled out of action. Meantime two other boats have

stealthily approached—quite unseen by the large ships—and fired their torpedoes, making hits. How are the umpires to know that these last two boats have not been seen by any of the crews and so cannot have been the target of any of the guns? They are ruled out. Ten minutes later, just as the fire has ceased, a fresh boat is seen coming up. The guns reopen, but in half a minute she is close enough in to fire her torpedo. The boat has not been two minutes under fire, and so she is ruled successful.

The fallacy of all deductions from such trials is that they exclude the moral element and the element of chance. A boat might very possibly be two minutes under fire—especially if the ship's crew are flurried—and not be sunk. She might, attacking a good, well-disciplined crew, be sunk in twenty seconds. Again, in the sham attack the boat's crew have not to face the ordeal of fire. They have not to steer their way through a furious tempest of projectiles, to which they can make no reply, and against which they have no shelter. They are not subject to the strain of wild, delirious excitement, which will carry away all but the coolest, and lead to a premature discharge or inaccurate adjustment of the torpedo.

Nor can the problem be solved by peaceable practice from the large ship at targets, representing torpedo boats, towed towards her. We might thus learn the number of hits her gunners would make on a boat, if they were perfectly cool; but there would be no allowance for the strain caused by the knowledge of the fact that if they did not hit the boat before she closed them, she would send them to the bottom. Actual war alone can determine the precise value of the torpedo boat.

The ram has been so entirely discredited since the torpedo was perfected that there is but little prospect of its being employed. The United States, however, have one specially built ram, the "*Katahdin*," whose performances will be watched with interest. It is not to be expected that she will startle the

world. She is a survival of the ideas of the Civil War, when ramming was a recognized part of naval tactics. Nowadays, a captain would not risk injuring his ship's bows, but would use his bow-torpedo, which would do the work of the ram most effectively. The Americans have other novel weapons—amongst these the pneumatic guns, mounted at Sandy Hook, and in the "Nitheroy" and "Vesuvius." Of these—which are projectors of aerial torpedoes—more may be expected.

Another matter on which we badly need information is the practicability of maintaining a blockade with the modern engines of naval war. To make a test thoroughly satisfactory, there should be torpedo boats in the blockaded port. This condition is wanting at Havana, and therefore Admiral Sampson's task has been, up to the time at which I write, comparatively simple. His officers and crews have not been subjected to the cruel moral and physical strain which the possibility of torpedo-boat attacks imposes. Nor have they had constantly to look out for the sailing of a hostile squadron inside Havana, almost equal in force to themselves. This was the striking feature of our blockades of the French ports in the great struggle with Napoleon. It is not surprising to learn that captains lost health and nerve, or went crazy under such a burden. In British maneuvers, a week or ten days of blockade under modern conditions has sufficed to show that the burden has grown heavier and not lighter.

Connected with this subject is the trial of the sea-keeping qualities of our new warships, which this struggle will impose. The engines and boilers of the battleship or cruiser are lighter and weaker than those of the merchant ship, knot for knot, since weight is a most important consideration. In time of peace the warship rarely steams faster than ten or twelve knots, at which pace her machinery may perform well enough. But in war time she may have to steam continuously for days at her very utmost speed; or, if in company with a fleet, she may have

now to run at top speed, now to stop, now to go astern, when the strain becomes tremendous. American ships are well boilered, and should stand this kind of work as well as any. Where they are perhaps weak is in the number of tricky engines and "dodges" that they carry. Hand-worked ammunition hoists are preferred in the British navy for moderate-sized guns, because they do not break down at the critical moment. In the American navy hydraulic or electric hoists are more favored. Their behavior in battle will be watched with the greatest interest.

As war grows more terrible, more devilish, it would seem that the loss of life diminishes. Deadly as the new weapons are, they have so great a moral effect on the fighting man that they prevent the close actions which were so bloody in the old days. I have in "Ironclads in Action" compared the loss of life and limb in six of the greatest battles, and it stands thus: Yalu 15½ per cent., Lissa 4, Trafalgar about 20, the Nile 20, Camperdown 13 and the First of June 15½. In the old battles men were not unfrequently injured or killed by the recoil of their own guns. This feature was faithfully reproduced at the Yalu, where no less than ten Japanese—according to Dr. Suzuki's report—died from "the vibration of air caused by the firing of their own guns." This in the modern ship is a new and most potent cause of mischief. In a British battleship I have seen a six-pounder gun severely injured by the blast of a ten-inch weapon—and had there been men quartered at it, they would have been killed. We know that, at the trials of the "Indiana," it was reported that her great thirteen-inch turret guns, if trained at their extreme angle, would have killed all the men at the six-inch gun, past which they fired. We know, too, that in certain French ships the men have to be recalled from the lighter guns before the heavy weapons can be fired in certain directions.

As I draw to my conclusion, there comes the news that American seamen have proved that they still possess the high courage of the race which beat us

in the "Constitution," which we beat in the "Chesapeake." In the Far East Admiral Dewey has dared to force his way across Spanish mine-fields and through the channel commanded by Spanish batteries, to the attack of Admiral Montojo's squadron. His spirit and resolution have caused a tingle of pride in every English heart, and a sense of satisfaction that the Anglo-Saxon has still, as of old, the tradition of sailormanship and hard fighting. We must wait for the detailed reports, which will scarcely be available till the war has ended, before drawing our deductions. That the experience thus gained in action will be of the extremest importance to all navies, and particularly to our own, no one will deny.

H. W. WILSON.

JOHN SPLENDID.¹

THE TALE OF A POOR GENTLEMAN AND THE
LITTLE WARS OF LORN.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN THE LAND OF LORN.

We might well be at our prayers. Appin paid dearly for its merriment in the land of Caillein Mor, and the MacDonalds were mulct most generously for our every hoof and horn. For when we crossed Loch Etive foot there came behind us from the ruined glens of Lower Lorn hordes of shepherds, hunters, small men of small families, who left their famished dens and holes, hunger sharpening them at the nose, the dead bracken of concealment in their hair, to join in the vengeance on the cause of their distress. Without chieftains or authority, they came in savage bands, affronting the sea with their shouts as they swam or ferried; they made up to the wildest of our troops, and ho, ro! for the plaids far and wide on the errands of Hell. In that clear, cold, white weather—the weather of the badger's dream, as our

proverb calls it—we brought these glens unfriendly, death in the black draught and the red wine of fire. A madness of hate seized on us; we glutted our appetites to the very gorge. I must give Argile the credit of giving no license to our ongoings. He rode after us with his Lowlanders, protesting, threatening, cajoling in vain. Many a remonstrance, too, made Gordon, many an opening fire he stamped out in cot and barn. But the black smoke of the granary belching against the white hills, or the kyloe, houghed and maimed, roaring in its agony, or the fugitive brought bloody on his knees among the rocks—God's mercy!

Do you know why those unco spectacles were sometimes almost sweet to me, though I was more often a looker-on than a sharer in their horror? It was because I never saw a barn blaze in Appin or Glencoe but I minded on our own black barns in Shira Glen; nor a beast slashed at the sinew with a wanton knife, but I thought of Molra, the dappled one that was the pride of my mother's byre, made into hasty collops for a Stewart meal. Through this remoter Lorn I went, less conscious of cruelty than when I plied fire and sword with legitimate men of war, for ever in my mind was the picture of real Argile, scorched to the vitals with the invading flame, and a burgh town I cherished reft of its people, and a girl with a child at her neck flying and sobbing among the hills.

Montrose and MacColkitto were far before us, marching up the Great Glen. They had with them the pick of the clans, so we lived, as it were, at free quarters, and made up for weeks of short fare by a time of high feeding.

Over Etive and through the Benderloch, and through Appin and even up to Glencoe, by some strange spasm of physique—for she was frail and famished—the barefooted old *caillach* of Carnus came after us, a bird of battle, croaking in a horrible merriment over our operations. The Dark Dame we called her. She would dance round the butchery of the fold, chanting her

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venomous Gaelic exultation in uncouth rhymes that she strung together as easily as most old people of her kind can do such things in time of passion or trance. She must have lived like a vulture, for no share would she have in our pots, though sometimes she added a *goût* to them by fetching dainties from houses by the way, whose larders in our masculine ignorance we had overlooked.

"I would give thee the choicest of the world," she would say. "What is too good for my heroes, O heroes of the myrtle-badge?"

"Sit down and pick," John Splendid bade her once, putting a roysterer's playful arm round her waist, and drawing her to the fire where a dinner stewed.

Up she threw her claws, and her teeth were at his neck with a weasel's instinct. But she drew back at a gleam of reason.

"Oh, darling, darling," she cried, patting him with her foul hands, "did I not fancy for the moment thou wert of the spoilers of my home and honor—thou, the fleet foot, the avenger, the gentleman with an account to pay—on thee this mother's blessing, for thee this widow's prayers!"

M'Iver was more put about at her friendliness than at her ferocity, as he shook his plaiding to order and fell back from her worship.

"I've seldom seen a more wicked cat," said he; "go home, grandam, and leave us to our business. If they find you in Lochaber they will gralloch you like a Yule hind."

She leered, witch-like, at him, clutched suddenly at his sword-hilt, and kissed it with a frenzy of words, then sped off, singing madly as she flew.

We left the Dark Dame on Levenside as we ferried over to Lochaber, and the last we saw of her, she stood knee-deep in the water, calling, calling, calling, through the grey, dun morning, a curse on Clan Donald and a blessing on Argile.

His lordship sat at the helm of a barge, his face pallid and drawn with

cold, and he sighed heavily as the bel-dame's cries came after us.

"There's little of God's grace in such an omen," said he, in English, looking at the dim figure on the shore, and addressing Gordon.

"It could happen nowhere else," said the cleric, "but in such a ferocious land. I confess it, my lord—I confess it with the bitter shame of surrender, that I behold generations of superstition and savagery still to beat down ere your people are so amenable to the Gospel as the folks of the Lowland shires. To them such a shrieking haridan would be an object of pity and stern measure; they would call her mad as an etter-cap, and keep her in bounds: here she is made something of a phphetess—"

"How?" asked Argile, shortly, and he was looking wistfully at the hills we were leaving—the hills that lay between him and his books.

"There's not a Highlander in your corps but has bowed his head to her blessing; there's not one but looks upon her curse of the MacDonalds as so much of a gain in this enterprise."

"Oh," said his lordship, "you are a little extravagant. We have our foolish ways, Gordon, but we are not altogether heathen; and do you think that after all there might not be something in the portents of a witch like yon in her exaltation?"

"No more than's in the howling of the wind in the chimney," said Gordon, quickly.

"Perhaps not," said Argile, after a little, "perhaps not; but even the piping of the vent has something of prophecy in it, though the wind bloweth where it listeth. I have only a scholar's interest in these things, I give you my word, and—"

He laughed with a little restraint before he went on.

"Do you know, John," he called out to M'Iver—"do you know what our *cailleach* friend says of our jaunt? She put a head in at my tent last night, and 'Listen, MacCallein,' said she, 'and keep on high roads,' said she, 'and Inverlochy's a perilous place.'

said she, 'and I'd be wae to see the heather above the gall.'"

John Splendid's back was to him as he sat at the prow of a boat coming close on our stern, but I saw the skin of his neck flame. He never turned: he made no answer for a moment, and when he spoke it was with a laughing allusion in English to the folly of portents.

This was so odd an attitude for a man usually superstitious to take up, that I engaged him on the point whenever we landed.

"You seem to have no great respect for the Dark Dame's wizardy," said I.

He took me aside from some of the clansmen who could overhear.

"Never let these lads think that you either lightly Dame Dubh or make overmuch of her talk about the heather and gall, for they prize her blessing, strangely enough, and they might lay too great stress on its failure. You catch me?"

I nodded to keep him going and turned the thing over in my mind.

"What do you think of the prophecy yourself?" he asked; "is it not familiar?"

In a flash it came to my mind that I had half-hinted to him at what the Macaulay woman had said in the fold of Elrigmore.

"I think," said I, "the less the brooding on these things the better."

If we had our own misgivings about the end of this jaunt, our companions had none. They plunged with hearts almost jocular into the woods on Lochaber's edge, in a bright sunshine that glinted on the boss of the target and on the hilt of the knife or sword; and we came by the middle of the day to the plain on which lay the castle of Inverlochy—a staunch quadrangular edifice with round towers at the angles, and surrounded by a moat that smelled anything but freshly. And there we lay for a base, and thence we sent out round Keppoch and Lochiel some dashing companies that carried on the work we began in Athole.

Auchinbreac's notion, for he was more than my lord the guide of this

enterprise, was to rest a day or two in the castle and then follow on the heels of Montrose, who, going up Loch Ness-side, as we knew he was, would find himself checked in front by Seaforth, and so hemmed between two fires.

It was about three o'clock on Wednesday afternoon when Argile sent for M'Iver and myself to suggest a reconnoitring excursion up the Great Glen by the side of the lochs, to see how far the enemy might have reached before us.

"I'm sorry to lose your company, gentlemen," said he, "even for a day; but this is a delicate embassy, and I can fancy no one better able to carry it through successfully than the two gentlemen who have done more delicate and dangerous work in the ranks of the honorable Scots Brigade."

"I can say for myself," said John, "that there's not a man in Keppoch could guess my nativity or my politics if I had on another tartan than that of the Diarmaid."

"Ah! you have the tongue, no doubt of it," said Argile, smiling; "and if a change of color would make your task less hazardous, why not affect it? I'm sure we could accommodate you with some neutral fabric for kilt and plaid."

"For the humor of the thing," said John, "I would like to try it; but I have no notion of getting hanged for a spy. James Grahame of Montrose has enough knowledge of the polite arts of war to know the difference between a spy in his camp in a false uniform and a scout taking all the risks of the road by wearing his own colors. In the one case he would hang us off-hand, in the other there's a hair's-breadth of chance that he might keep us as hostages."

"But in any tartan, cousin, you're not going to let yourself be caught," said Argile. "We have too much need for you here. Indeed, if I thought you were not certain to get through all right, I would send cheaper men in your place."

John laughed.

"There's no more cure," said he, "for

death in a common herd than for the same murrain in an ensign of foot."

"A scholar's sentiment!" cried Argille. "Are you taking to the philosophies?"

"It's the sentiment, or something like it, of your chaplain, Master Gordon," said John; "he reproved me with it on Dunchuach. But to do myself justice, I was never one who would run another into any danger I was unwilling to face myself."

The marquis said no more, so we set about preparing for the journey.

"Well, Elrignore, here we are running the loupegarthe with MacDonalds on the one side of us and Camerons on the other," said my comrade, as we set out at the mouth of the evening, after parting from a number of the clan who went up to the right at Spean to do some harrying in Glen Roy.

No gavilliger or provost-marshal ever gave a more hazardous gauntlet to run, thought I, and I said as much; but my musing brought only a good-humored banter from my friend.

All night we walked on a deserted, rocky roadway under moon and star. By the side of Loch Lochy there was not a light to be seen; even the solitary dwellings we crept by in the early part of our journey were without smoke at the chimney or glimmer at the chink. And on that loch-side, towards the head of it, there were many groups of mean little hovels, black with smoke and rain, with ragged, sloven thatch, the midden at the very door and the cattle routing within, but no light, no sign of human occupation.

It was the dawning of the day, a fine day as it proved and propitious to its close, that we ventured to enter one such hut or bothy at the foot of another loch that lay before us. Auchinbreac's last order to us had been to turn wherever we had indication of the enemy's whereabouts, and to turn in any case by morning. Before we could go back, however, we must have some sleep and food, so we went into this hut to rest us. It stood

alone in a hollow by a burn at the foot of a very high hill, and was tenanted by a buxom, well-featured woman with a herd of duddy children. There was no man about the place; we had the delicacy not to ask the reason, and she had the caution not to offer any. As we rapped at her door we put our arms well out of sight below our neutral plaids; but I daresay our trade was plain enough to the woman when she came out and gave us the Gael's welcome somewhat grudgingly, with an eye on our apparel to look for the tartan.

"Housewife," said John M'Iver, blandly, "we're a bit off our way here by no fault of our own, and we have been on the hillside all night, and——"

"Come in," she said, shortly, still scrutinizing us very closely, till I felt myself flushing wildly, and she gave us the only two stools in her dwelling, and broke the peats that smouldered on the middle of her floor. The chamber—a mean and contracted interior—was lit mainly from the door and the smoke-vent, that gave a narrow glimpse of heaven through the black *cabar* and thatch. Round about the woman gathered her children, clinging at her gown, and their eyes stared large and round in the gloom at the two of us who came so appallingly into their nest.

We sat for a little with our plaids about us, revelling in the solace of the hearty fire that sent wafts of odorous reek round the dwelling, and to our dry rations the woman added whey, that we drank from birch cogies.

"I am sorry I have no milk just now," she said. "I had a cow till the day before yesterday; now she's a cow no more, but pith in Colkitto's heroes."

"They lifted her?" asked John.

"I would not say they lifted her," said the woman, readily, "for who would be more welcome to my all than the gentleman of Keppoch and Seumais Grahame of Montrose?" And

again she looked narrowly at our close-drawn plaids.

I stood up, pulled out my plaid-pin, and let the folds off by shoulder, and stood revealed to her in a Diarmaid tartan.

"You see we make no pretence at being other than we are," I said, softly; "are we welcome to your whey and to your fire-end?"

She showed no sign of astonishment or alarm, and she answered with great deliberation, choosing her Gaelic, and uttering it with an air to impress us.

"I dare grudge no one at my door," said she, "the warmth of a peat and what refreshment my poor dwelling can give; but I've seen more welcome guests than the spoilers of Appin and Glencoe. I knew you for Campbells when you knocked."

"Well, mistress," said M'Iver, briskly, "you might know us for Campbells, and might think the worse of us for that same fact (which we cannot help), but it is to be hoped you will know us for gentlemen too. If you rue the letting of us in, we can just go out again. But we are weary and cold and sleepy, for we have been on foot since yesterday, and an hour among bracken or white hay would be welcome."

"And when you were sleeping," said the woman, "what if I went out and fetched in some men of a clan who would be glad to mar your slumber?"

John studied her face for a moment. It was a sonsy and good-humored face, and her eyes were not unkindly.

"Well," he said, "you might have some excuse for a deed so unhospitable, and a deed so different from the spirit of the Highlands as I know them. Your clan would be little the better for the deaths of two gentlemen whose fighting has been in other lands than this, and a wife with a child at her breast would miss me, and a girl with her wedding-gown at the making would miss my friend here. These are wild times, goodwife, wild and cruel times, and a widow more or less is scarcely worth troubling over. I think we'll just risk you calling in

your men, for, God knows, I'm wearied enough to sleep on the verge of the Pit itself."

The woman manifestly surrendered her last scruple at his deliverance. She prepared to lay out a rough bedding of the bleached bog-grass our people gather in the dry days of spring.

"You may rest you a while, then," said she. "I have a husband with Keppoch, and he might be needing a bed among strangers himself."

"We are much in your reverence, housewife," said John, nudging me so that I felt ashamed of his double-dealing. "That's a bonny bairn," he continued, lifting one of the children in his arms; "the rogue has your own good looks in every lineament."

"Aye, aye," said the woman, dryly, spreading her blankets; "I would need no sight of your tartan to guess *your* clan, master. Your flattery goes wrong this time, for by ill-luck you have the only bairn that does not belong to me of all the brood."

"Now that I look closer," he laughed, "I see a difference; but I'll take back no jot of my compliment to yourself."

"I was caught yonder," said he to me a little later in a whisper in English, as we lay down in our corner. "A man of my ordinary acuteness should have seen that the brat was the only unspoiled member of all the flock."

We slept, it might be a couple of hours, and wakened together at the sound of a man's voice speaking with the woman outside the door. Up we sat, and John damned the woman for her treachery.

"Wait a bit," I said. "I would charge her with no treachery till I had good proofs for it. I'm mistaken if your lie about your wife and weans has not left her a more honest spirit towards us."

The man outside was talking in a shrill, high voice, and the woman in a softer voice was making excuses for not asking him to go in. One of her little ones was ill of a fever, she said, and sleeping, and her house, too, was in confusion, and could she hand him out something to eat?

"A poor place Badenoch nowadays," said the man, petulantly. "I've seen the day a bard would be free of the best and an honor to have by any one's fire. But out with the bannocks and I'll be going. I must be at Kilcumin with as much speed as my legs will lend me."

He got his bannocks and he went, and we lay back a while on our bedding and pretended to have heard none of the incident. It was a pleasant feature of the good woman's character that she said never a word of her tactics in our interest.

"So you did not bring in your gentlemen?" said John, as we were preparing to go. "I was half afraid some one might find his way unbidden, and then it was all bye with two poor soldiers of fortune."

"John MacDonald the bard, John Lom, as we call him, went bye a while ago," she answered simply, "on his way to the clan at Kilcumin."

"I have never seen the bard yet that did not demand his bardic right to kailpot and spoon at every passing door."

"This one was in a hurry," said the woman, reddening a little in confusion.

"Just so," said M'Iver, fumbling in his hand some coin he had taken from his sporran; "have you heard of the gold touch for fever? A child has been brought from the edge of the grave by the virtue of a dollar rubbed on its brow. I think I heard you say some neighbor's child was ill? I'm no physician, but if my coin could—what?"

The woman flushed deeper than ever, an angered pride this time in her heat.

"There's no child ill that I know of," said she; "if there was, we have gold of our own."

She bustled about the house and put past her blankets, and out with a spinning-wheel and into a whirr of it, with a hummed song of the country at her lips—all in a mild temper, or to keep her confusion from showing itself undignified.

"Come away," I said to my comrade in English, "you'll make her bitterly angry if you persist in your purpose."

He paid no heed to me, but addressed the woman again with a most ingenious story, contrived with his usual wit as he went on with it.

"Your pardon, goodwife," said he, "but I see you are too sharp for my small deceit. I daresay I might have guessed there was no child ill; but for reasons of my own I'm anxious to leave a little money with you till I come back this road again. We trusted you with our lives for a couple of hours there, and surely, thinks I, we can trust you with a couple of yellow pieces."

The woman stopped her wheel and resumed her good humor. "I thought," said she, "I thought you meant payment for—"

"You're a bit hard on my manners, goodwife," said John. "Of course I have been a soldier, and might have done the trick of paying forage with a sergeant's bluntness, but I think I know a Gaelic woman's spirit better."

"But are you likely to be passing here again at any time?" cried the woman, doubt again darkening her face, and by this time she had the money in her hand. "I thought you were going back by the Glen?"

"That was our notion," said my comrade, marvellously ready, "but to tell the truth we are curious to see this Keppoch bard, whose songs we know very well in real Argyle, and we take a bit of the road to Kilcumin after him."

The weakness of this tale was not apparent to the woman, who I daresay had no practice of such trickery as my friend was the master of, and she put the money carefully in a napkin and in a recess beneath one of the roof-joints. Our thanks she took carelessly, because we were Campbells, no doubt.

I was starting on the way to Inverlochy when M'Iver protested we must certainly go a bit of the way to Kilcumin.

"I'm far from sure," said he, "that that very particular bit of MacDonald woman is quite confident of the truth of my story. At any rate, she's no woman if she's not turning it

over in her mind by now, and she'll be out to look the road we take before very long or I'm mistaken."

We turned up the Kileumin road, which soon led us out of sight of the hut, and, as my friend said, a glance behind us showed us the woman in our rear, looking after us.

"Well, there's no turning so long as she's there," said I. "I wish your generosity had shown itself in a manner more convenient to us. There's another example of the error of your polite and truthless tongue. When you knew the woman was not wanting the money, you should have put it in your sporran again, and—"

"Man, Elrigmore," he cried, "you have surely studied me poorly if you would think me the man to insult the woman—and show my own stupidity at the same time—by exposing my strategy when a bit fancy tale and a short daunder on a pleasant morning would save the feelings of both the lady and myself."

"You go through life on a zigzag," I protested, "aiming for some goal that another would cut straight across for, making deviations of an hour to save you a second's unpleasantness. I wish I could show you the diplomacy of straightforwardness: the honest word, though hard to say sometimes, is a man's duty as much as the honest deed of hand."

"Am I not as honest of my word as any in a matter of honor? I but gloze sometimes for the sake of the affection I have for all God's creatures."

I was losing patience of his attitude and speaking perhaps in bitterness, for here was his foolish ideas of punctilio bringing us a mile or two off our road and into a part of the country where we were more certain of being observed by enemies than the way behind us.

"You jink from ambushade to ambushade of phrase like a fox," I cried.

"Call it like a good soldier, and I'll never quarrel with your compliment," he said, good-humoredly. "I had the second excuse for the woman in my mind before the first one missed fire."

"Worse and worse!"

"Not a bit of it: it is but applying a rule of fortification to a peaceful palaver. Have bastion and ravelin as sure as may be, but safer still the sally-port of retreat."

I stood on the road and looked at him, smiling very smug and self-complacent before me, and though I loved the man I felt bound to prick a hole in his conceit.

But at that moment a dead branch snapped in a little plantation that lay by the way, and we turned quickly to see come to us a tall, lean man in MacDonald clothing.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TRAPPED.

He was a lantern-jawed, sallow-faced, high-browed fellow in his prime, with the merest hint of a hirkle or halt in his walk, very shabby in his dress, wearing no sporran, but with a dagger bobbing about at his groin. I have never seen a man with surprise more sharply stamped on his visage than was betrayed by this one when he got close upon us and found two of a clan so unlikely to have stray members out for a careless airing on a forenoon in Badenoch.

"You're taking your walk?" he said, with a bantering tone, after a moment's pause.

"You couldn't have guessed better," said John. "We are taking all we're likely to get in so barren a country."

The stranger chuckled sourly as the three of us stood in a group surveying each other. "My name," said he, in his odd north Gaelic, and throwing out his narrow chest, "is John MacDonald. I'm Keppoch's bard, and I've no doubt you have heard many of my songs. I'm namely in the world for the best songs wit ever strung together. Are you for war? I can stir you with a stave to set your sinews straining. Are you for the music of the wood? The thrush itself would be jealous of my note. Are you for the ditty of the lover? Here's the songster

to break hearts. Since the start of time there have been 'prentices at my trade: I have challenged North and East, South, and the isle-flecked sea, and they cry me back their master."

M'Iver put a toe on one of mine, and said he, "Amn't I the unlucky man, for I never heard of you?"

"Tut, tut," cried the bard in a fret, "perhaps you think so much in Argile of your hedge-chanters that you give the lark of the air no ear."

"We have so many poets between Knapdale and Cruachan," said John, "that the business is fallen out of repute, and men brag when they can make an honest living at prose."

"Honest living," said the bard, "would be the last thing I would expect Clan Campbell to brag of."

He was still in an annoyance at the set-back to his vanity, shuffling his feet restlessly on the ground, and ill at ease about the mouth, that I've noticed is the first feature to show a wound to the conceit.

"Come, come," he went on, "will you dare tell me that the shelling singers on Loch Finneside have never heard my 'Harp of the Trees'? If there's a finer song of its kind in all Albainn I've yet to learn it."

"If I heard it," said John, "I've forgotten it."

"Name of God!" cried the bard in amaze, "you couldn't; it goes so," and he hummed the tune that every one in Argile and the west had been singing some years before.

We pretended to listen with eagerness to recall a single strain of it, and affected to find no familiar note. He tried others of his budget—some rare and beautiful songs, I must frankly own: some we knew by fragments; some we had sung in the wood of Creag Dubh—but to each and all John Splendid raised a vacant face and denied acquaintance.

"No doubt," said he, "they are esteemed in the glens of Keppoch, but Argile is fairly happy without them. Do you do anything else for a living but string rhymes?"

The bard was in a sweat of vexation. "I've wandered far," said he, "and you beat all I met in a multitude of people. Do you think the stringing of rhymes so easy that a man should be digging and toiling in the field and the wood between his *duans*?"

"I think," said Splendid (and it was the only time a note of earnestness was in his utterance)—"I think his songs would be all the better for some such manly interregnum. You sing of battles: have you felt the blood rush behind the eyes and the void of courageous alarm at the pit of the stomach? You hum of grief: have you known the horror of a desolate home? Love—sir, you are young, young——"

"Thanks be with you," said the bard; "your last word gives me the clue to my answer to your first. I have neither fought nor sorrowed in the actual fact; but I have loved, not a maid (perhaps), nor in errant freaks of the mind, but a something unnameable and remote, with a bounteous overflowing of the spirit. And that way I learned the splendor of war as I sat by the fire; and the widows of my fancy wring my heart with a sorrow as deep as the ruined homes your clan have made in my country could confer."

I'm afraid I but half comprehended his meaning, but the rapture of his eye infected me like a glisk of the sun. He was a plain, gawky, nervous man, very freckled at the hands, and as poor a leg in the kilt as well could be. He was fronting us with the unspoken superiority of the fowl on its own midden, but he had a most heartsome and invigorating glow.

"John Lom, John Lom!" I cried, "I heard a soldier sing your songs in the ship 'Archangel' of Leith that took us to Elsinore."

He turned with a grateful eye from M'Iver to me, and I felt that I had one friend now in Badenoch.

"Do you tell me?" he asked, a very child in his pleasure, that John Splendid told me after he had not the heart to mar. "Which one did they sing—"

'The Harp of the Trees' or 'Macrannul Og's Lament?' I am sure it would be the Lament: it is touched with the sorrow of the starless night on a rain-drummed, wailing sea. Or perhaps they knew—the gentle hearts—my 'Farewell to the Fisher.' I made it with yon tremor of joy, and it is telling of the far isles beyond Uist and Barra, and the Seven Hunters, and the white sands of Colomkill."

M'Iver sat down on the wayside and whittled a stick with a pretence at patience I knew he could scarcely feel, for we were fools to be dallying thus on the way in broad morning when we should be harking back to our friends as secretly as the fox.

"Were you on the ocean?" he asked the bard, whose rapture was not abated.

"Never," said he, "but I know Linnhe and Loch Eil and the fringe of Morar."

"Mere dubs," said M'Iver, pleasantly—"mere dubs or ditches. Now I, Barbreck, have been upon the deeps, tossed for days at hazard without a headland to the view. I may have made verse on the experience—I'll not say yea or nay to that—but I never gave a lochan credit for washing the bulged sides of the world."

"You hadn't fancy for it, my good fellow," said the bard, angry again. "I forgot to say that I saw Loch Finne too, and the Galley of Lorn taking MacCallein off from his castle. I'm making a song on that now."

"Touched!" thinks I, for it was a rapier-point at my comrade's very marrow. He reddened at once, pulled down his brows, and scanned the bard of Keppoch, who showed his knowledge of his advantage.

"If I were you," said John in a little, "I would not put the finish on that ditty till I learned the end of the transaction. Perhaps MacCallein (and God bless my chief!) is closer on Lochiel and Lochaber to-day than you give him credit for."

"Say nothing about that," said I warningly in English to my friend,

never knowing (what I learned on a later occasion) that John Lom had the language as well as myself.

"When MacCallein comes here," said the bard, "he'll get a Badenoch welcome."

"And that is the thief's welcome, the shirt off his very back," cried M'Iver.

"Off his back very likely," said the bard; "it's the back we see oftenest of the bonny gentleman."

M'Iver grew livid to the very lip, and sprang to his feet, clutching with great menace the black knife he had been whittling with. Not a bit abashed, the bard pulled out his dirk, and there was like to be a pretty to-do when I put between them.

The issue of the quarrel that thus I retarded was postponed altogether by a circumstance that changed the whole course of our adventure in this wild country—severed us at a sharp wrench from the Campbell regiments, and gave us the chance—very unwelcome it was—of beholding the manner of war followed by Alasdair MacDonald's savage tribes. It happened in a flash, without warning. No blow had been struck by the two gentlemen at variance, when we were all three thrown to the ground, and the bound prisoners of a squad of Macgregors who had got out of the thicket and round us unobserved in the heat of the argument.

They treated us all alike—the bard as curt as the Campbells, in spite of his tartan—and without exchanging any words with us marched us before them on a journey of several hours to Kilcumin.

Long or ever we reached Kilcumin we were manifestly in the neighborhood of Montrose's force. His pickets held the road; the hillsides moved with his scouts. On a plain called Leiternan-lub the battalion lay camped, a mere fragment of the force that brought ruin to Argile: Athol men under the Tutor of Struan, Stewarts of Appin, MacIans of Glencoe, a few of the more sedate men of Glengarry, Keppoch and Maclean, as well as a handful of the Gregarach who had

captured us. It was the nightfall when we were turned into the presence of Sir Alasdair, who was sitting under a few ells of canvas playing cartes with some chieftains by the light of a fir-root fire.

"Whom have we here?" said he, never stopping for more than a glimpse of us.

"Two Campbells and a man who says he's bard of Keppoch," he was told.

"A spy in an honest tartan, no doubt," said Sir Alasdair; "but we'll put it to the test with Keppoch himself: tell him to come over and throw an eye on the fellow."

Keppoch was sent for, and came across from a fire at another part of the field, a hiccough at his throat and a blear look in his eye as one that has been overly brisk with the bottle, but still and on the gentleman and in a very good humor.

"Here's my bard sure enough," he cried. "John, John, what do you seek in Kilcumlin, and in Campbell company too?"

"The company is none of my seeking," said John Lom, very short and blunt. "And we're like to have a good deal more of the same clan's company than we want before long, for Argile and his clan to three times your number are at Inverlochy. I have tramped a weary day to tell you the tale, and I get but a spy's reception."

The tale went round the camp in the time a man would whistle an air. Up came Montrose on the instant, and he was the first to give us a civil look. But for him we had no doubt got a short quittance from MacColkitto, who was for the tow gravatte on the spot. Instead we were put on parole when his lordship learned we had been cavaliers of fortune. The moon rose with every sign of storm, the mountains lay about white to their foundations, and ardent winds belched from the glens, but by mountain and glen MacDonald determined to get round on the flank of Argile.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

From The Contemporary Review.
BACHELOR WOMEN.

People who have a taste for abstract political speculation ought to read Signor Ferrero's book, "*L'Europa Giovane*," which is a study of Northern Europe as it appears to an observer who is of Latin race and a disciple of Lombroso. He pays us Anglo-Saxons the compliment of a particular attention; and one of his most amusing chapters is exclusively devoted to what he takes to be our most characteristic product—the emancipated woman. This chapter is entitled "*The Third Sex*" (*Il Terzo Sesso*), and from the observation of facts as they are, it trends a good deal into the region of prophecy. Marriage is becoming daily more difficult, says Signor Ferrero, owing to a network of obstacles, mostly economical, and, as a consequence, the army of voluntary celibates increases. Now, the presence of any new class in society must ultimately make itself felt; and the class of bachelors, male and female, is assuming, in his judgment, alarming proportions. Of the two divisions into which that class falls, it is the women who will make themselves felt as a novel force; for obvious reasons there is not the same difference of character between the bachelor and the married man as between the married woman and the spinster. It is the increasing preponderance of the spinster in Anglo-Saxon society that strikes Signor Ferrero and fills him with apprehensions of the most formidable nature.

Women, he says, are gradually invading all the fields in which man had formerly no competition; and it is a new type of woman who is competing—women who have accepted the necessity of single life and who throw into their work all the energy which nature intended to meet the drain of maternity. Renan has somewhere laid it down that the highest intellectual development can only be attained by absolute chastity (in the Roman Catholic sense); as if there were a total

fund of nervous energy available which may be drawn upon solely for the intellect, or, as is the common case, both for the intellect and the emotions. (The idea seems absurd, but I am concerned at present merely to state Signor Ferrero's opinion.) Consequently the competitor who now meets man at every turn is a creature like the working bee, in whom the desire to be a wife or a mother has been atrophied, and the driving force of that desire is converted into a feverish hunger for work. Woman will count for more and more in the world; all careers will soon be open to her, for she will knock passionately at every door till she is admitted, and, once she is allowed to compete, this sexless creature, this working bee, has such an advantage in the struggle for life as a man would have who could live without eating. What will be the result? Till quite lately marriage has been the only profession open to a virtuous woman: it has been the one success within her grasp. That view is frankly recognized by women, for to every woman marriage in itself is still accounted a promotion. There may be counterbalancing circumstances, but to be married is in itself an object of desire and a subject of congratulation. With men the case is the other way. When a man marries, his friends will admit to themselves that there may be or there are compensations; but the position of a single man is in itself envied and applauded, that of a single woman emphatically is not. In England the single woman has always been able to secure a reasonable freedom, and she has never been accounted ridiculous as she still is in Italy, and to some extent in France. But till of late years she has not had a career open to her, as a single woman, except in works of charity, where there is neither the stimulus of competition nor the consequent intoxication of success. Nowadays there is an alternative to matrimony set before every ambitious woman: she has to choose between marriage and a career; and already, says Signor Fer-

rero, she chooses the career. He illustrates by an example:—

I knew a family which was composed as follows: the mother, widow of a Cambridge professor, had devoted herself to politics and fought in the front ranks of the Radical party; the eldest daughter, unmarried and thirty, was a journalist and lived by herself in a flat, where she received her friends of both sexes; the second was a professor of history at Girtton; the third had founded a model farm with the purpose of training ladies to earn their livelihood as gardeners; the fourth had become an artist and was studying sculpture. Not one of these four girls had the least desire to marry, nor troubled herself in the least to captivate a man. They might easily have found husbands, as all were well off, and the two youngest exceptionally good-looking; but they did not want to; they said that as things were they had more freedom, and that marriage would diminish their liberty and their pleasures in life. They had, in short, devoted themselves to sterility, not from religious motives, but from sheer calculation.

This family is, he admits, an exception; but it is for all that a type, and will, on his view, be increasingly less exceptional. The desire for marriage is less in itself with woman than with man. *Dans le mariage il y a toujours celui qui aime, et celui qui se laisse aimer*; and it is in nine cases out of ten, says Signor Ferrero, the woman *qui se laisse aimer*. Offer her a substitute for marriage and she will not marry.

When a woman has thrown herself into a pursuit knowledge exaggerates her egoism by strengthening her personality; why should she go in search of a different felicity without the certainty of success when there is already one to hand? Her life has gradually been absorbed by one preoccupation; why risk herself in the vicissitudes of love and a family? The physical impulse is too weak, and seldom succeeds in leading a young woman away from her books; her intellectual preoccupation makes it difficult for a feeling of sympathy for a man to grow to the pitch of love; and consequently love is not born and marriage disgusts. English society will probably dif-

ferentiate itself into two classes with different functions: one of women designed for the humble duty of preserving the species; the other of sexless creatures, intelligent, learned, industrious, but barren, living solely by the brain, with heart and senses petrified. Thus the higher education of women, far from completing man's felicity, and adding a new splendor to the solution of the problem of love, will be a cause of fresh disappointment, bitter conflicts and worse complications. Already it frequently occurs that a young man wants to marry a pretty young woman, but finds her life taken up with a study of Roman coins, or devoted to a propaganda of universal suffrage. These cases will grow more and more frequent, and man will oftener and oftener have to supplicate hearts of ice for a love which they are no longer capable of feeling.

This is indeed a black look-out. In England, Signor Ferrero says, we may be able to stand it; but imagine if it came to that in Sicily! However, it does not do to take this reasoner quite seriously; let us put his positions into a moderate form. In his opinion the result of woman's increasing emancipation is to give fresh openings for her activities; the alternative of a professional or literary career makes women indifferent or disinclined to marriage; and lastly, this increasing disinclination will give women more and more the whip-hand of us poor Anglo-Saxons. Are these things so? No one who knows anything of London can shut his eyes to the growth of such a class as Signor Ferrero talks of; everybody must number among his or her acquaintances several ladies who live entirely by themselves and work for their living, just as their brothers might do. It is certainly a new class, and will probably make itself felt in society; but in what way? By an aversion to matrimony? Frankly, one doubts it. Miss Clough, the late principal of Newnham, was not only a conspicuous instance of the woman who makes herself a career, but was a woman whose life-work consisted in turning out these independent young ladies—what one may call bachelor women. Yet in her biography there

occur several passages where this very strong and self-supporting lady expresses her desire for marriage—her wish to have some one to lean upon, some one to take decisions for her. But it is undesirable to discuss this matter with reference to definite individuals, who must either be living or only recently dead; and happily, other documents are not hard to come by. Many of these bachelor women live by literature, and almost without exception they write novels. If one looks at their books it is not hard to see how the problem of life and the ambitions of celibacy present themselves to the people directly interested in them. I take two recently-published novels, both of them decidedly clever, which study with an obvious familiarity the habits and adventures of the young lady who lives by herself and by her own exertions. One of them is "Among Thorns," by "Noel Ainslie;" the other, by Miss Evelyn Sharp, is called "The Making of a Prig." Noel Ainslie has written another novel, "An Erring Pilgrimage," where the chief character is again a bachelor woman, but to this I only mean to allude in passing. It is an unpleasant tale, and treats of circumstances which cannot fairly be regarded as typical. There is, however, this much in common between all three books: the heroine is a young lady who comes up to London to live by her wits. Veronica, of the "Erring Pilgrimage," belongs to a well-marked subsection of this class: those who make the endeavor because they have got to. Katharine Austen, Miss Sharp's heroine, exemplifies the more numerous body of those who come away from home because they are bored, or out of sympathy with their surroundings. The army of bachelor women—the modern "Legion of St. Ursula"—recruits itself especially from the girls who have been to school or college, and in the process of receiving higher education have acquired a distaste for monotony and a determination to "live their own life." As to Lesbia Meynell, the principal character in "Among Thorns," she is a

lady journalist when the story opens, and Noel Ainslie does not make it quite clear whether she has no option but to become one. However, all three have made the choice in good earnest. Katharine has a home still open to her, but she runs her experiment to the verge of starvation, like the two others. And here one notes that, by the showing of these two ladies, the reign of woman is not yet completely inaugurated. The most useful thing a bachelor woman can find is a man who will help her to get work. All three heroines owe their success to a man. Paul Wilton gets Katharine her first engagement at a school; Lesbia Meynell is taken on the staff of the *Decade* because Wynyard Cuthbert thinks she has sympathetic eyes. Noel Ainslie and Miss Sharp, one perceives, do not paint the working gentlewoman's outlook in rose color. Lesbia and Katharine are not endowed with genius; they have no preternatural talent for success; plenty of other women in the same position have as good abilities; but these are two of the lucky ones who get a chance and profit by it. What becomes of those who do not get the chance? Their lines certainly do not fall in pleasant places. They lodge, a good many of them, at some such institution as No. 10 Queen's Crescent, Marylebone, which Miss Sharp has described so vividly. This is a home where working gentlewomen, to the number of sixty-three, live together, and its features are very interesting. There is, to begin with, a prospectus; there is always a prospectus. Then there is a common dining-room, where the inmates—well, they do not dine, but they eat together. The butter is not attractive, so the newcomer is advised to try the treacle. "You can't go far wrong with treacle. The jam's always suspicious; you find plumstones in the strawberry, and so on." There are two reception-rooms upstairs, and there are sleeping-rooms partitioned off by curtains into cubicles. There is also a bath-room where the inhabitants can bathe in turns—by putting their names down beforehand;

the turn comes about once a fortnight; and you clean your own boots. The ladies who live there are type-writers, shorthand clerks, and so forth; they are, most of them, not accurately described as ladies; but if one can believe Miss Sharp, there is a deal of human nature among them, and most of it pleasant. Lesbia Meynell is a rung or two higher up on the ladder than Katharine. She has rooms at No. 2 Carados Street, Bloomsbury, which, as the landlady's pretty daughter Peggy observes, is a halfway house where no one stays long. Lodgers go up, or they go down, but they do not remain at the level of Carados Street. Lesbia Meynell has enough to eat and drink, but she is never asked to houses; like Katharine, she visits nowhere; and she has no occasion to wear the evening frocks, in which she is aware that she always looks her best. Like Katharine, she is consumed with a desire for pleasure, and the only people of her acquaintance to whom the pleasures come get them from man. This way of life, whether for good or bad, does away with censoriousness. Lesbia meets at the office of the *Decade* ladies with either a past or a present; the pretty Peggy comes in with her eyes shining to tell how one of the lodgers has taken her to a restaurant and a music-hall. As for Katharine, she also lives among young women who only find a break in their bread-and-butter existence when some one takes them to dinner, and they do not all profess to be rigorous. Katharine herself finds the bright spots of life consist in the hours which she spends with one or other of her two adorers. Man, you see, still counts, even with the emancipated woman. Both Katharine and Lesbia are lavishly provided for in the matter of lovers: each has two, one simple and straightforward, who loves *pour le bon motif*; one worldly wise and subtle, who is chiefly bent on amusing himself. Needless to say, each of the girls loves the less deserving man; but the main point is that each of them is in love. The attraction of the bachelor

existence, which is great—for even with its privations, neither Lesbia nor Katharine would go back to stay-at-home ways—lies, no doubt, partly in the interest of work: Katharine is a born teacher who has found her vocation, Lesbia experiences the usual triumph of the lady journalist who gets into print. But the principal charm of their life is the intercourse with the other sex on terms which, under the old rules, would have been entirely impossible. Jack Graham, the artist, who also lodges at No. 2 Carados Street, comes in to smoke cigarettes with Lesbia in her rooms; Wynyard Cuthbert, the wicked hero, calls on her at nine o'clock. Katharine frequently visits Paul Wilton in his chambers at the Temple, and only objects to the concealment which he, as a man of the world, insists on keeping up. It is perfectly right for you and me, she insists; and he has to admit that it is, for she is the sort of young woman who is safe anywhere, even with the not too scrupulous man whom she loves. Then, says Katharine, if it is right, why conceal it? That is the logic of Bohemia, where everybody does things because they seem pleasant or right to do, not because society has decreed that they are right or pleasant. Paul Wilton declines to be convinced, but Katharine holds to it that the bachelor woman may do whatever is not immoral.

Everybody who knows the society which Noel Ainslie and Miss Sharp are describing will recognize that these facts are a faithful transcript. Indeed now grown so common as to be hardly noticeable. What a change in a quarter of a century! But it is equally clear that this is something very unlike the state of things which Signor Ferrero predicts so ruefully. Man plays a much more important part in the life of these ladies than he used to do in that of their mothers. They depend on him very largely for their success in life, very largely for their pleasures, and he counts among their friends without any nonsense of Platonism.

Katharine is quite honestly friends with Ted, the nice boy, who is the foil to Paul Wilton. One notices also that what appeals to them about man is particularly his masterfulness. Any of them would certainly have endorsed the pronouncement of a charming lady who is no longer a bachelor. She described the amusements of her bachelor life and the interests of an artistic career with such zest that one naturally asked if it had not been an effort to give it up. "Ah, but you get so bored with it," she said; "you do so want some one to tell you not to do things." This, perhaps, is an aspect of man which appeals to woman most strongly before marriage; and, in point of fact, both Lesbia and Katharine adore their wooers particularly when they find themselves ordered about; but when Jack Graham begins to tell his wife Lesbia not to do things, Lesbia finds it a bore. Katharine is left at the gates of matrimony, but I make no doubt that she asserted herself a little afterwards. This sweet submissiveness to masculine caprices is only characteristic of the bachelor woman who associates with man as an equal, not of the lady in whom matrimony soon teaches him to recognize his superior. Upon the whole, then, it does not seem likely that the advent of the working gentlewoman is likely to rule man out. Man will continue to be as interesting to woman as woman is to man, in spite of the predictions of Italian professors.

But that does not alter the fact that there exists a new class, a new social type, and we may interrogate our witnesses about it. Listen to Miss Sharp:—

"Think of the progress that has been made even in my time," says an enthusiastic lady to Katharine, "and in another ten years there will be nothing that woman will not be able to do in common with men. Isn't it a glorious reflection?"

"I don't think it will be so," persisted Katharine. "It has nothing to do with education or any of these things. A woman is handicapped just because she is a woman and has to go on living like a

woman. There is always home work to be done, or some one to be nursed, or clothes to be mended. A man has nothing to do but his work; but a woman is expected to do a woman's work as well as a man's. It is too much for anyone to do well. I am a working woman myself, and I don't find it so pleasant as it is painted."

"Tell me," said her aunt earnestly; "don't you find women are happier if they have work to do for their living?"

"I suppose it is possible, but I haven't met any who are," answered Katharine. "I think it is because they feel they have sacrificed all the pleasures of life. Men don't like women who work, do they? Oh! yes, they have lots of admiration for us, but they don't fall in love with us, that's all. I think it is because it is the elusive quality in woman that fascinates man; and directly they begin to understand her, they cease to be fascinated by her. And woman is growing less mysterious every day now; she is chiefly occupied in explaining herself, and that is why men don't find her such good fun. At least, I think so."

One may say in passing that if the race of women stoned Miss Sharp and Noel Ainslie with stones for giving away their secrets, no man could be surprised. But is Miss Sharp right in describing the working woman as one who gives up the pleasures of life? That is doubtful. The pleasures of idleness and prettiness, perhaps; but unless she has to work to the very pin of her collar, she has really a better time than her predecessors, only that she is not so easily contented. The woman who has lived in Bohemia has one distinguishing mark: she is intolerant of trivialities, and especially intolerant of boredom. This is how Katharine's home struck her when she went back to it in her first holidays:—

Iringdon seemed narrower in its sympathies and duller than ever; she wondered how people could go on living with so few ideas in their minds and so few topics of conversation; even the rector (her father) irritated her by his want of interest in her experiences and by his utter absorption in his own concerns.

Lesbia Meynell marries Jack Gra-

ham when a chance takes him from living on a pittance by his art into a good business position, and she emerges from Bohemia into a flat in Kensington. But she finds it dull; the routine of calls and callers bores her to extinction; and when she hears that the pretty Peggy has gone off with a rich young man to Paris, her first movement is one of envy. Peggy, at least, is getting some color into her life. The fact is that the new denizen of Bohemia falls between two stools—two ways of life. The things which to her mother or grandmother would have seemed quite amusing and gay—a round of afternoon tea-parties, with an occasional dance—no longer amuse her. She wants stronger excitements. And, on the other hand, she is disqualified by her education for what used to be accounted the natural relaxations of Bohemia—the life that Henri Murger sketched, perhaps with more charm than realism. She has no desire to be respectable, she scorns the word; but she has not the least intention of being anything else. Now, the chief desire of all these lady bachelors, in the Bohemia where people work, is to get out of it—or so their authors testify—and there are only two ways out. One is marriage, the other is not. One leads into society, where people pay calls of ten minutes, the other leads to the Bohemia of champagne and supper-parties. Neither goal is attractive. Occasionally the Bohemian may hit on some half-way house; Lesbia Meynell's husband gives up business, and, having a little money, returns to his painting while she writes, and they live happily for ever after, somewhere in St. John's Wood, undisturbed by social duties. But that is the exception. For the most part the bachelor woman has either to grow old in her virtuous Bohemia—and it is not wholly a cheerful fate—or to marry and go into ordinary society.

There is, however, one thing to be said. If she immigrates in sufficient numbers into society she will probably end by modifying its conventions; and it is surprising what a number of

women one meets who have, at one time or another, studied art in Paris, and lived on two or three francs a day when allowances ran short, or assisted in a bonnet-shop, or tried their hand at journalism. A good many, of course, have merely broken away from home for a few months in sheer desire of change, or have set up a studio chiefly in order that they may give tea-parties in it. But however little serious may have been the work they did in their effort to be self-supporting, yet the habit of independence is implanted and a rude shake is given to the old equilibrium. Working gentlewomen who are promoted to the dignity of marriage will probably by their combined influence modify social usages to a very considerable extent, though by no means in the direction that Signor Ferrero indicates.

But in the meanwhile they have pioneered the way for a class of celibate women who, under the old conditions, would almost certainly have married. These are the people whom one may venture to call club-women, and they are in many respects the opposite of those about whom Miss Sharp and Noel Ainslie write. The working gentlewoman, as we have seen, wants to get married, in order that she may have less work and more comforts; the club-woman, who is often a widow, remains unmarried for the very same reason. Naturally, she is not a pioneer, nor an emancipator, nor enthusiast, nor theorist of any kind; she is simply the counterpart of the clubman; that is to say, a person who organizes life on the lines of least resistance, and aims chiefly to save trouble and avoid responsibility. While it was bad form for a woman to live in chambers by herself, these ladies would never have thought of doing so; but as soon as society accepted people who were either doing or had done this thing, they realized the possibilities open to them, and, though they were no theorists, contentedly put themselves in advance of humdrum people. And certainly they have gained enormously in the con-

veniences of life. The lady who has five or six hundred a year and no incumbrances used formerly to be obliged to take a house and have two or three servants; that condemned her at once to a cheap suburb, and made entertaining practically impossible. Now she has chambers somewhere in Piccadilly, her mind is free from the cares of a household, she has neither to engage nor dismiss servants, nor compose their quarrels; she has absolutely all the attendance she wants, and everything about her is well turned out; meals come for the touching of a bell, and instead of a carriage she has her pick of the hansoms. If she wants to see faces about her and avoid that sense of solitude which has driven so many women into matrimony, all she has to do is to step round to her club; it may be a club for women only, or, if she prefers it, one of the mixed arrangements which are becoming so popular.

The result certainly ought to be a great falling off in the number of marriages of convenience, since the ladies who take to this way of life are precisely those who used to marry for convenience. What is the middle-aged gentleman of the future who is tired of club life to say to the lady who is installed no less excellently than himself? Does he offer her the comforts of a home? "The comforts of a home," she will reply, "are for the husband." Will she contentedly take upon her the charge of an establishment and endure the daily tedium of eating dinners which she has ordered herself? In short, we seem likely to develop not merely the bachelor-woman, but the old-bachelor-woman, who will be a very different person from the old maid. But whether these new varieties will remain merely superficially distinct, or whether, as Signor Ferrero believes, they will fundamentally modify the nature of woman and the constitution of society—whether the Institute of Women Journalists and the creation of Albe-Marle and Sesame Clubs will prove epoch-making institutions, or whether

the world will go on much the same in spite of them—are wide questions which only a disciple of Lombroso feels able to answer out of hand. One thing seems clear: that since women have professed an ability to support themselves, the British *paterfamilias*, who always encourages self-help in his children and has the easiest views concerning parental responsibility of any father in Europe, will not hesitate to urge upon his daughters the desirability of doing so.

STEPHEN GWYNN.

From Temple Bar.

PAOLO.

I.

He was a boy of strictly limited experience. Never once in his life of eleven years had he crossed the communal boundary of the *castello*, his birthplace—Castel San Giorgio, one of the dozen white-walled villages which, like daisies sprinkling a lawn, stud the green plain of the Bacchiglione from Monte Berici to the foot of the Euganean Hills.

The country between the Brenta and Adige is full of such villages as this in which Paolo lived with his stepmother Lucia and a little half-brother, eight years younger than himself; each one clustering about a slender, red-roofed *campanile*, each boasting its yellow-washed church and gayly-painted *trattoria*, its common fountain (protected, perhaps, by a mouldering Gothic canopy), to which the village girls bring their great brass pitchers morning and evening, and its scrap of green, where the young men play *palli* on Sundays and holy days, while the two dignified *carabinieri*, responsible for parochial peace, look on indulgently, arrayed in all the magnificence of festival uniform. It is a sturdy people which inhabits these rural townships—a people of husbandmen and vine-dressers, of neatherds and goatherds—the men tall, wiry,

active; the women buxom, black-browed, and extraordinarily fluent of speech, as anyone who has heard them chaffer over their cheeses and tomatoes in the bi-weekly market at Padua will readily testify.

Lucia Crespi, Paolo's stepmother, was a typical specimen of her race—a young Juno, imperfectly disguised in a faded red petticoat, coarse blue knitted stockings, and a green "bedgown"—the latter frequently out at elbows, for this rustic goddess had neither time nor money to expend on the adornment of her person. In a place where all were poor—between the tax-gatherer, the phylloxera, and that terrible conscription which annually levied tribute upon its able-bodied young men, the village had small chance of growing rich—Lucia ranked among the poorest. Once—in the happier days, when Beppo was still a baby, and remittances arrived regularly from the sailor-husband aboard a South American liner—she had been fairly prosperous, as Castel San Giorgio counts prosperity. But now that Beppo was growing into a fine, hungry boy, while two whole years had elapsed without bringing a single money order (or so much as a line intimating his continued existence) from Beppo's father, his wife found the task of maintaining herself and two children one of weekly increasing difficulty; and this, although she worked gallantly at harvesting and fruit-picking, each in its season, and toiled early and late in the single field and strip of vineyard which, with a few goats, alone stood between her and the day of unemployed destitution.

Everybody was sorry for Lucia Crespi, a woman with whom fate had dealt maliciously, allotting her all the disadvantages of widowhood without its compensating freedom.

"If one did but know for certain that Andrea was dead," old Agnese, her next-door neighbor, would observe, with a compassionate sigh, "then she might marry again with a clear conscience. 'Tis hard upon a woman when she goes bound to a man that

never comes home, and has, maybe, lain in his grave these two years past."

Lucia herself did not complain of the ambiguity of her position. She fully believed Andrea to be yet alive. Did he not always wear round his neck a holy medal which had touched the relics of blessed Santa Fina, warranted to preserve him from shipwreck? And albeit Carlo Foppa, the hawker, mocked at the virtues of holy medals, and the young parish priest, fresh from his seminary, murmured uneasily that such objects were intended by the Church rather for the wearer's spiritual benefit than his bodily protection, Lucia's confidence was not shaken. Doubtless, Santa Fina understood that what Andrea required of her was no shadowy grace, but a continuance of that breathing, tangible life in the flesh which his wife—short fare and hard work notwithstanding—herself fond so agreeable.

For Lucia was by no means an unhappy woman. When *polenta* ran short she ate chestnuts, and hoped for better days. Some time or other Andrea would come back; meanwhile, she had her little Beppo, his living image, and the handsomest, healthiest child in the village. The presence of the stepchild in the often sorely-pinched household she endured with tolerable patience. The appetite of a growing boy—even a sickly one—is a formidable thing to reckon with, and doubtless Lucia did occasionally resent the necessity laid upon her of catering for Paolo's, whose lameness made it impossible for him to add anything to speak of to the family exchequer. But these fits of ill-temper were never of long duration. As a rule, in her rough way, she was kind to the boy, in whom she freely acknowledged a good boy, very useful with the goats.

Paolo, on his side, accepted the place assigned to him in the scheme of things without murmur—almost without regret. To him, it appeared part of the providential order that he should be the first, in bad seasons, to go on

chestnut diet, and quite a matter of course that the extra covering should be taken from his bed for Beppo whenever the child complained of cold. Was not the best of everything Beppo's by natural right? Not Lucia's own eyes beamed upon her darling with more of admiring affection than did those of the child's crippled half-brother. Had she not been there to secure the choicest morsel, the warmest corner for Beppo, these would have fallen all the same to Beppo's share, by Paolo's free gift.

One thing—and only one—did Paolo keep sacred from the baby's inquisitive fingers—the colored print of St. Antony which his grandmother had brought him when she went to Padua on pilgrimage. This he had pinned up on the wall of the living-room, well out of Beppo's reach, nor could all Beppo's entreaties, nor the tart remarks of Lucia on the inexpediency of being selfish, induce him to deliver it up to destruction. It was his single piece of personal property, and he clung to it tenaciously. Besides, he liked the kind face of the saint with the lilies on his arm, and in the winter evenings, after Beppo was asleep, he would sit and look up at it affectionately in the light of the smoky cresset, dreaming of a far-off day when he should be tall and strong, and have a festival suit like Agnese's Pietro, and money to buy a big candle, and go thus equipped to distant Padua, to "see the saint."

Perhaps it was that phrase—so common on the people's lips throughout Venetia—which made Paolo feel as though the original of his precious print were still living on the earth. Yet those who went from San Giorgio to visit the Grey Brother had little to say, when they returned, of the ostensible object of their journey. Their talk was all of a big church, and fine shops, and the people they had met on the road. And when Paolo asked Lucia—who had enjoyed the coveted experience in her girlhood—whether she were not very anxious to see Il Santo again, she astonished him by replying:—

"No, indeed! One must go once, of course. But once is enough."

II.

Nevertheless, Lucia did presently pay a second visit to the patron of Padua.

A long, wet winter, following on the bad harvest and disastrous vintage which meant chestnuts for everybody in Castel San Giorgio, played havoc with many infantile constitutions, and with Beppo's among the number. Spring found the sturdy, daring child a frail, spiritless little being, a miserable prey to recurrent attacks of malarial fever which the doctor from San Germano de Berici seemed powerless to check. When, with the long days and hot noons of late May, the fever-fits only grew more frequent, and the patient more exhausted, his mother rose up, wild with terror, and declared her intention of going to St. Antony.

Her neighbors applauded her resolution—had not each one of them heard of cases, abandoned by all physicians, in which St. Antony had wrought a perfect cure?—and Paolo drew a long, silent breath of relief. For weeks past, an unspoken fear had been brooding upon his young soul. The knowledge that *la mamma* meant to apply in the right quarter for assistance seemed to lift the oppressive weight a little.

That evening, when the shadows fell long across the maize-fields, and the kine came trooping home from the fat green meadows to the sunset milking, filling all the dusty village street with their sweet breath, he consulted Agata Ricci, the innkeeper's little daughter—who had joined him on the doorstep, where he was eating his evening mess of cold lentil soup—touching the probable success of his stepmother's pilgrimage. (Agata, being eighteen months his senior, and a person possessing much knowledge of the world—she had once travelled by railway, and spent two nights in Vicenza—he felt great respect for her judgment.) Did she think Il Santo would be able to cure Beppo?

"Of course! Il Santo can do anything," Agata responded confidently. "Why, he even made a baby alive that was dead! There's a—a picture of it, all in marble, on the wall of his shrine at Padua."

Paolo dropped his spoon with a clatter.

"You've been there," he faltered, awe-struck.

Agata nodded in a self-satisfied manner.

"I went last week. Cousin Caterina took me. I rode into market with her in a cart with *two* mules," she said loftily.

But the magnificence of Cousin Caterina's equipage was lost upon Paolo, absorbed in more weighty considerations.

"Is the shrine very beautiful?" he inquired in a subdued voice.

"I should think so!" was the returned pilgrim's reply. "You never saw such a lot of candles! And big silver lamps besides, with angels holding them—great angels as tall as Padre Vincenzo; and heaps of lovely jewelry hanging up; beautiful gold bracelets and earrings—*la cugina* said some of them must have cost a hundred *lire* at least. Then there were funny little wax hearts, and legs and arms, and two crutches like yours, only bigger."

"But Il Santo himself; did you see *him*? What is he like?" Paolo interrupted.

Agata stared, opening the big, black eyes, which contrasted oddly with her sun-bleached hair, to their widest extent; then burst into a laugh.

"Why, you talk just as if he was alive," she giggled. "Don't you know that Il Santo died—oh! ever so many years ago, and is up in heaven, stupid?"

"Of course I know he's in heaven," apologetically. "But he's there too, isn't he?"

"He's *buried* there, if that's what you mean. And they say—" Agata paused.

"What?"—eagerly.

The girl drew closer.

"Well, they *do* say that, sometimes, in the middle of the night, he comes out and walks about the church. There was once a woman called Anna, who stayed all night before the shrine, praying. I should be afraid to do that, wouldn't you?"

"I don't know," doubtfully. "But go on. Did Anna see him?"

"Yes. She looked up, and there he was under the *baldacchino*, all in a glory. And presently, he came down and passed by her, very, very quietly, and went up the steps into the choir. She knew it was Il Santo, because he had a grey dress and a lily in his hand."

"That's just how he is in my picture!" Paolo cried, breathless with interest.

"I've got a picture too," Agata remarked. "A bigger one than yours, with writing at the bottom. I can say the writing off to you by heart." And in a sing-song voice she began to recite: "'Sant' Antonio of Padua, bright Luminary of the Church, Lustre of Seraphic Religion, Glory of Portugal, Honor of Spain, Treasure of Italy, Terror of Hell, Terrible Hammer of Heresy, reckoned among the Saints for his virtues, worker of Miracles.'"

Paolo listened to her shrill chant enraptured. Surely one who held so high a place in the court of heaven must have power to make Beppo well! That St. Antony would be willing to perform this work of mercy, Paolo had little doubt; he looked so kind! And as to his being the "terror of hell and terrible hammer of heresy" (Paolo did not quite know what heresy was, but presumed it to be some kind of devil), *that* was all in Beppo's favor. For did not Agnese say that, but for the Evil One, there would be no fevers in the world, and no bad harvests?

It was with the happiest anticipations that he watched his stepmother set out for Padua the following morning.

Lucia started at dawn, leaving Beppo in charge of his half-brother ("The boy's a bit soft, maybe," she would say, touching her own forehead

significantly, "but I can trust him with the child"), arrayed in her Sunday clothes and having in her pocket a silver piece, the last of her poor savings, to buy the candles which were to serve as propitiatory offering to the saint. Late in the afternoon of the next day she reappeared, with a light of hope in her eyes, which died out of them at the sight of old Agnese's face.

"He is better?" she asked falteringly of the old woman, who stood watching for her in the doorway.

"Eh, *poverina*, of what use to lie? No, poor mother, he is not better, though the innocent here"—indicating Paolo, who stood behind her with wide eyes of anguish, set in a dead-white face—"fancied him so, because he slept. No true sleep, as I saw directly, and the strange English doctor too. But come in, Lucia *mia*! 'Tis a long march from Padua, and—Madonna, child! what hast done with thy silver hairpins?"

"Sold them!" Lucia answered defiantly. "Ah, you can none of you say I haven't done my best for the child! Four of the biggest candles to be bought for money in that cruel city, where you can't get a draught of milk or a crust of bread without paying a *soldo* for it. And yet he's no better, you say?"

"We must have faith in the Madonna and Saint Antony," Agnese admonished her piously.

But poor Lucia's faith broke down before the spectacle of Beppo lying half-conscious, indifferent even to the sound of his mother's voice. She gave herself up to despair, paying no heed at all to Agnese's story of the English *medico* on a walking tour, who had stopped that morning to look at the child, and, having pronounced nourishing food the sole medicine needed for his cure, had left a gold piece to be expended in eggs and soup-meat.

"He will die; my Beppo will die," she wailed passionately across the fire, over which her neighbor was cooking "the Englishman's broth." "Truly, the ways of the good God are strange. To take my Beppo, a boy as beautiful

as a picture, and leave that other—a poor, sickly creature, who will never be any good in the world.”

Agnese, intent on her cookery, merely shook her aged head in depreciation of remarks which seemed to impugn the wisdom of Providence. Neither of the women could see Paolo leaning against the door-jamb, with quivering lips and burning eyes.

“And Padre Vincenzo, who would have me believe that God and Il Santo may be answering my prayers by taking him,” Lucia resumed between sobs. “As if, when I said ‘save him,’ I meant *that!*”

“Perhaps Il Santo mistook your meaning,” suggested Carlo Foppa, the hawker, who was sister’s son to Agnese, from the chimney-corner. “One should be very plain with a saint like that—a busy man, plagued with many suitors.”

Lucia started and turned pale.

“Surely!” she began.

But Agnese interposed with—

“Don’t answer him, *carina!* And you, Carlo Foppa, hold your blaspheming tongue! Shame on you—before the child, too,” catching sight suddenly of Paolo at the door. “There, Paolino, run off and bring in the goats. ’Tis milking time.”

Mechanically obedient, Paolo did as he was commanded. But when his task of milking was over, and the goats were safely penned for the night, he threw himself down in a dark corner behind their little fold, and let the iron of those things he had overheard enter into his childish soul.

Beppo was going to die, and *la mamma* wished him to die instead, because he was of no good in the world. He would be very glad to die—he did not care at all to live without Beppo. But his dying would not make Beppo well.

Unless, indeed—Agata declared Il Santo could do *anything*. Then, perhaps, he might arrange for Paolo to die in his brother’s place.

The difficulty was to get the saint to interest himself in the matter. (As Carlo Foppa said, he had so many

suitors). No hope of attracting his attention in Castel San Giorgio; one must go to Padua and “see” him. Paolo remembered, with a leap of the heart, Agata’s story of that Anna who had really and truly “seen” him. “Perhaps, if I pray very hard, I may see him too. And then I won’t let him pass by. I shall call out, and ask him to listen.”

Clearly—the boy decided—it was his duty to go to Padua and make a fresh appeal to St. Antony, face to face.

That night Lucia, worn out with fatigue and weeping, went to bed with the sun, and slept heavily. Beppo, too, slept—after a supper of Agnese’s soup—a “true sleep,” which Paolo’s eyes were too inexperienced to distinguish from the ominous stupor of the morning. Looking at his brother’s small, wan face in the light of the rising moon, the boy’s heart died within him. What if he should not get to Padua in time?

Neither mother nor child stirred as he climbed—with many painful precautions against noise—on a rickety chair, and, having detached his beloved picture from the wall, descended again to lay it on the ragged coverlet at Beppo’s feet. Thus did he execute his last will and testament. That weighty business accomplished, he stuffed a hunch of stale bread and an onion into his pocket, opened the door, and crept out into the moonlight.

For the first mile or so he hopped along gallantly. He was not afraid of the long, lonely road stretching before him like a silver ribbon, nor yet of the silent meadows and vineyards on either hand; a summer night had no terrors for him, who had faced it often before, in charge of his little flock of goats. Only he missed the friendly breath of the animals about him, and the cheerful tinkle of their bells.

But soon he began to grow weary. Active as had been his life, he was not inured to steady walking on a high-road—his occupations leading him rather to slow sauntering over some upland pasture, or leisurely pottering

among the vines. The chronic pain in his hip waxed gradually worse and worse; loose stones cut his bare feet; a sudden dizziness overtook him periodically, making it imperative that he should stop and rest. But with the passing of each attack he pressed on undaunted. "I'll walk till the moon sets and I can't see the sign-posts"—only by help of these could he find his way. "Then I'll lie down awhile," he said to himself, and hobbled on.

It was on the edge of a wood—when he had covered but five miles of the eighteen dividing Castel San Giorigio from Padua—that darkness overtook him. He stumbled into the shelter of the trees, curled himself up among the roots of a great elm, and, with a muttered prayer that Beppo might live till the morrow, fell asleep.

The chill of dawn roused him—shivering now with fever, and conscious of a strange, unfamiliar heaviness in all his limbs—to a new dread. What if he should die before he could explain matters properly to Il Santo? The terrifying thought gave fresh impetus to his faltering feet. But his progress remained miserably slow. The sun stood high in the heavens when he stopped exhausted beside the seventh milestone, and waited, between hope and fear, for the appearance of the cart he could hear jolting and creaking behind him.

If only he could feel sure it had a woman-driver! Women were generally so much kinder to him than men.

Fortunately, the cart's sole occupant proved to be a woman—a stout, middle-aged *contadina* seated above a heap of green-stuff which filled her vehicle to overflowing, who did not wait to be accosted, but pulled up with a loud—

"What are doing here so early, child? Been after Gian Zanelli's cherries, eh?"

"No, mother; no, indeed!" And Paolo gave a brief account of his errand—reserving only that proposed exchange of lives which was, he felt instinctively, a matter for St. Antony's ear alone. The peasant woman drew

the back of a brown hand across her eyes as she listened.

"Walking all the way from Castel San Giorigio!" she muttered compassionately. "Holy Madonna! and you so lame—and sick too, by your looks. Well, climb up beside me; I'm going as far as Vigodarzere."

Paolo climbed gladly—to find that his new friend's practical sympathy was not exhausted by this offer of a "lift." She made room for him to nestle down comfortably among the cabbages; she fed him with bread and tomatoes, and gave him a sup of wine from the straw-covered flask, tucked away into a corner with the provision for her midday meal. Her kindness had a reviving effect upon the boy. He got down from the cart at Vigodarzere, quite ready to continue his march. Only three miles more!

But, alas! he had reckoned without the noonday sun, beating down mercilessly upon his fevered head, making the dusty highway intolerable to his wounded feet. The three miles leading from Vigodarzere to the Porta Santa Croce proved a veritable *via crucis* to the unhappy little pilgrim. And inside the city walls, where the streets were paved with torturing cobbles, and everything he saw added to the bewilderment born of suffering and excitement, things were even worse. Astray for the first time in a town, the country-bred child found the task of reaching that spot which is still, in a sense, the centre of Paduan life one of insurmountable difficulty. In vain did the passers-by to whom he put timid inquiries explain, and point, and gesticulate in their graphic Southern fashion. He could not follow their directions; arrived within a stone's throw of the Duomo, he wandered helplessly away from it to begin his search afresh. And thus he might have continued to wander, had not a stout seller of sweetmeats, who was displaying her wares in the shadow of the Sala della Ragione, taken pity on him as he halted by, murmuring his perpetual question.

"Can't you understand?" she asked

briskly, noting the puzzled air with which he listened to her instructions. "Never been in Padua before, perhaps? No? Ah, that accounts! Well, Teresa here shall show you the way—and you'll say a Pater and Ave for us at the holy place, eh?"

Little Teresa, nothing loth, trotted briskly along the Selciato del Santo; and Paolo limped painfully in her wake. It was as much as he could do to drag himself up the great flight of steps, at the foot of which she nodded and left him.

But once fairly within the vast church, all lesser sensations—even consciousness of bodily pain—were swallowed up in an overwhelming rush of astonishment and awe. Never had Paolo seen—never dreamed of—a building approaching in size and grandeur that on whose threshold he stood trembling. The roof, rising to such a height that his sun-blinded eyes could not penetrate its dark recesses; the three great naves stretching away into the unfathomable gloom of the choir; the bewildering multitude of side-chapels ablaze with lights; the dazzling shrine which, to the simple mind of the little peasant, seemed to comprise all the glories of heaven itself—these things were too wonderful for Paolo. He shrank down in his distant corner, terrified.

Regaining, after a while, some measure of courage, he began to look about him. Then he discovered that the church was full of people. All access to the chapel which, from its magnificence, he knew to be the place of "the Saint" was barred to him by a dense throng of men and women in festival clothes, all pressing in one direction, all having their faces turned one way.

The sight of this crowd (a company of "pilgrims" come by the morning train from Venice) threw Paolo into a passion of despair. What hope that Il Santo, so besieged, would have any leisure for him?

But one chance was left him. If he could stay till nightfall, when all the rest would be gone, then perhaps—

But would he be permitted to stay? The eye of a passing sacristan, dropped for a moment on the ragged cripple, made him tremble for his scheme. Suppose they turned him out?

He looked round for some place in which to hide. On his right hand, facing the shrine, and only a little further west, was the chapel of the Madonna, richly draped, and adorned with flowers in honor of her month. The embroidered hangings covering the walls were particularly long and heavy, sweeping in ample folds upon the floor; under them was safe cover for a dozen little boys. Paolo glanced round to make sure he was unobserved, lifted a corner of the crimson curtain, and ensconced himself quickly behind it.

There, as he lay very still, a sense of peace descended upon him. True, his head still burned, and his hip throbbed painfully, while his heart beat so feebly that it was a matter of difficulty to draw breath. But he had accomplished his journey; and he felt satisfied now that he should not die—before the time.

Several times he peeped from his lair at the wonderful crowd kneeling, standing, moving over the marble floors. Once he raised himself to his knees that he might fulfil his promise to the mother of his little guide: more than once he tried to nibble the slice of melon which had been the kind *contadina's* parting present. Twenty-four hours earlier, he would have counted it heavenly diet; to-day he did not care for it—perhaps because he was so tired.

Gradually he sank into a sleep—so profound that neither the retreating footsteps of the Venetian pilgrims, nor the clanging of the great west doors as the chief sacristan locked them for the night, availed to break it. When he awoke, it was to utter darkness, utter silence.

For a moment he lay confused and quaking, unable to remember where he was. Then remembrance came back with a rush; and he sat up, his

heart beating hard against his side. The great moment had come!

Pushing aside the friendly hanging, he peered out cautiously. All dark! save where the seven lamps which burn perpetually before St. Antony's shrine cast long, pale streamers across the central nave and between the huge columns—silver lines drawn upon a background of night.

Shivering convulsively—for the fever had renewed its hold upon him—Paolo fumbled for his crutch, found it, and staggered unsteadily out of the chapel. In the nave he stopped short; partly for want of breath, partly because the tap of the crutch upon the marble floor sounded terrifyingly loud in the midst of that profound quiet. With swimming eyeballs, he gazed at that oasis of light in the midst of a desert of blackness.

And, as he gazed, his heart began to beat faster than ever. Surely, surely something was moving within the closed gates of the shrine? Was not that a footfall on the pavement? Yes!—and now the gates roll back on their hinges, and a figure issues forth—a tall figure in monkish robes which sweep the marble, carrying a great bunch of lilies in the hollow of his left arm. Il Santo himself! Only his robes are not grey any longer, but glistening white; and his face, so sad in the picture, wears a smile.

Alas for Paolo's valiant resolutions! In presence of the vision granted to his prayers, courage forsook him utterly. Try to stop that glorified figure? He dared not. He could only huddle down upon his knees, holding out mute hands of petition.

Fortunately the vision needed no word to arrest it. As Paolo's crutch fell ringing to the ground, it halted, seemed to examine the little figure crouching in the shadow, moved on again—and stopped before him.

"Child"—said a deep voice—"who are you, and what are you doing here?"

The voice was sweet but authoritative—at once encouraging and compelling an answer—and the boy on his

knees found strength to reply tremulously:—

"My name is Paolo Crespi. I came from our village—from Castel San Giorglo—to see Il Santo."

"Ah!"—a pair of clear brown eyes fell for a moment on the crutch; and the sweet voice was even sweeter than before, as it added—"I see. You have come to ask Sant' Antonio's intercession—"

"Not for myself!" Paolo interposed quickly—in mortal terror of some misunderstanding. "For Beppo."

"And who is Beppo?"

"My little brother. He is dying. Oh, please, please don't let him die!" Paolo pleaded, holding up his thin hands in an agony of supplication. "Do let me die instead! I am no use, and *la mamma* will not mind my dying—but she says she cannot live without Beppo. Everybody loves Beppo; he is so beautiful and clever. Oh, *Signor Santo*, please. I came on purpose, and it is such a long, long way!"

The white-robed figure bent forward and laid its hand on Paolo's quivering shoulder. "My dear boy," it said, very pitifully—"we will pray the good God to cure your little brother. As for you—"

"Then you *will*?" Paolo interrupted rapturously. "And I may die in his place, mayn't I? Oh, how good you are!"

With a last effort of failing strength, he threw himself forward to kiss the blessed hand that had rested for a moment on his shoulder—and fell insensible across the vision's feet.

Twelve hours later, never having recovered consciousness, he died in the infirmary of the Servite Fathers—whither Brother Antonio (who, prompted by devotion to Our Lady and St. Antony his patron, had risen a full hour before the rest of his community, that he might renew the lilies on their altars) carried him as tenderly as though he had indeed been the compassionate saint whose name he bore. So was one-half his prayer granted him; nor did the other remain unfulfilled.

For Beppo revived, and still lives, the pride of his mother's heart, and the most mischievous young urchin in Castel San Giorgio. And Lucia, in gratitude for his recovery, has vowed a yearly candle to Il Santo, and talks down all Agnese's references to the providential appearance of "the foreign doctor," with counter-references to that pilgrimage of hers which wrought so wonderful a cure in her son.

Of Paolo's pilgrimage she is not quite so ready to boast; being slightly jealous of the notion (advanced by some of her neighbors) that Beppo owes his life rather to his brother's efforts than her own. Yet she let fall one or two kindly tears on first hearing of the boy's end. As she herself says, he was not a bad boy—and very useful with the goats.

CONSTANCE SMITH.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
ODD VOLUMES.

The belief in a future state of reward and punishment, nearly universal among the human race, receives remarkable modifications according to the physical surroundings and mode of life of different nations. The Red Indian can imagine nothing better than the chase: to his spirit the immortal instinct has suggested an ideal land with never-failing herds of buffaloes; and his "happy hunting-grounds" have passed into proverbial use with us. On the other hand, the heaven of the Protestant Christian, to whom the Red Man has had to yield his possessions in this world, has been described by Mr. Crauford as "a prolonged picnic of the domestic affections."¹ Similarly, the precise nature of the place of eternal torment has received various interpretation, according to the earthly experience of different races. We, in Western Europe, having derived our religion from oriental sources, where the sun is the natural power most

dreaded, have accepted the idea of intense heat—unquenchable fire—as the most intolerable form of punishment. But the Red Indian suffers most from cold in this world; his hell, therefore, presents itself to him like one of Dante's most appalling pictures—a *mer de glace*, swept everlastingly by piercing winds.² To modern humanitarians (and we are all humanitarians now, as compared with bygone generations), the idea of never-ending, excruciating physical pain has become too repugnant to be entertained as the inevitable retribution for human error or obstinacy: many people regard the mere infinite prolongation of existence, under an obligation to reflect on lost opportunities, misused gifts and friendships forfeited by exclusion from the abode of the blest, as the utmost retribution on the wicked that could be reconciled with any human conception of mercy and equity. But the question is far too solemn and profound to be discussed in this place: it has only been referred to because, seeing that various races have depicted the future state subjectively to their experience in this world, there does not seem to be any limits to each man's speculation from his own point of view. It would be almost as difficult, for instance, for one who derives frequent solace from reading to conceive heaven as a place without books, as to imagine it without human friendship. The absence of books might be but indifferently compensated for by the presence of their writers: in this world, at least, it does not always happen that he who delights us between boards is equally good company in shoe-leather. Horace, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Scott—we might lose nothing by exchanging their books for their conversation; but, on the other hand, Swift was tiresomely deaf. Doctor Johnson's personal habits were something short of pretty, and Voltaire—well, the dear man would strike one as sadly out of place in a celestial scene where there was nothing to scathe with ridicule. Thus the book-

¹ Christian Instincts and Modern Doubts.

² Catlin's North American Indians.

lover might conjure up a sufficiently appalling retribution for his own evil-doing by imagining a perspective of ages through which he should be forced to pass without one glimpse of a printed page.

Perhaps this is not a very profitable line of meditation, and certainly it is not very closely connected with the subject of this paper—viz.: the chance meetings of a lounge with out-of-the-way authors.

It sometimes occurs to one to wonder why portrait painters do not make more frequent use of book-shelves as the background of their subjects. There is no such charming furniture as books—no tapestry so rich as the glow, the glimmer or the gloom reflected from their serried backs; even pictures fail to diffuse such an air of comfort in a room. On the other hand, what scene so depressing as a public library? Those, indeed, who learn the use of one of these institutions acquire affection for it: my steps turn cheerfully up St. James's Square to the wonderful storehouse of the London Library (much as I resent the over-zealous enterprise of the committee in demolishing the grimy old front in order to replace it with Heaven knows what fandango of the urban architect), for I have learned to value its inexhaustible resources, its twilight resting-places, the wonderful adroitness and rapidity of its staff.

But it must be confessed that a library of this sort has few attractions for the casual visitor. Tens—nay, hundreds—of thousands of books, most of them uniformly clad in a tint so designedly sombre as will least betray dirt, tend to deter rather than to attract the loiterer: *studiorum instrumenta*, to be sure, but not the tools that fit so sweetly after long use into the accustomed palm, nor yet those that wear such a seductive burnish and crispness in the warehouse. In a library like this, books do not seem to be the same creatures as those you know so well at home, in your friend's house, or in the club: the difference is as great as between the cattle penned

by thousands for slaughter at Deptford, and the same animals scattered over the summer landscape. Nobody goes to the cattle-market until he has made up his mind what he wants, but any one may derive enjoyment from the lowing herds among their natural surroundings.

Books, like men and women, owe a great deal to the circumstances under which one meets them. It happened one day that I had to while away an hour or two in a small town of remote westerly Scotland. From the scale of the ancient inn, with its deserted stable-court opening through an archway upon the highroad to Carlisle, it was evident that it had once been a change-house for the mail-coach; but it was still and forlorn enough now. Outside, it was raining and blowing snappishly, which forbade all project of exploring the neighborhood; inside, the furniture of the commercial-room was not exactly voluptuous—good, solid mahogany, with black horsehair seats and sofa-backs, half veiled by ingenious dust-traps of worsted work, on which the traveller must have been weary indeed who sought repose; a mirror over the mantel-piece, of course, reflecting some bunches of highly colored feather flowers and a sample of last year's oats, and stuck round the margin with a few funeral or memorial cards of the landlady's departed friends.

Drip, drip, splash, drip! went the weeping eaves upon the pavement; the bare ash-boughs round the town bowling-green whimpered in the wet wind—it was not exhilarating. A pinched dozen of books propped each other rather dismally on a shelf of the side-table, which they shared with a most unattractive cruet-stand and a carafe of water of a complexion which almost excluded the idea of beverage. A tattered volume of "Good Words;" somebody's "Life of Lord Beaconsfield," in *criard* blue cloth and brassy gilding; Whately's "Logic;" Whitaker's Almanack, five years old—Hey! what's this in walnut calf? not an Aldine classic? It is, though; and very oddly it stirs

one to come on the honored dolphin and anchor among such ignoble surroundings; to turn the pages of fine flax paper, printed in delicate italics, "justified" with as nice a sense of symmetry as three centuries and a half of finger practice have imparted to latter-day craftsmen, not to reckon linotypes, monotypes, and other inartistic inventions. The book is in large octavo—the "*Libri de Re Rustica*"—printed in Venice in 1533.

Now, whatever people may pretend, there are very, very few nowadays who read Latin and Greek authors by deliberate choice. Fifty years ago it may have been—nay, it was—a little different: educated persons were careful to mention in their journals how they carried in their pockets duodecimos of Virgil or Horace, to be enjoyed at odd moments. But even so, was there not in this a suspicion of pose, or at least the conscious display of culture? At all events, when W. H. Smith & Son began to set up their book-stalls in the early days of the railway era, *ils connaissent leur monde* far too well to stock them with literature of that nature, even for first-class passengers. No; I don't wish it to be understood that under other circumstances I should have wasted a moment over this volume of agricultural writers, but circumstance accounts for a great deal. The time spent with Columella in his olive-yard, herb-garden, cattle-pen and sheepfold passed very quickly; when my post-shay came to the door, I tucked the book under my arm, pressed five shillings into the landlady's hand (I believe I might have had it for ninepence), carried off my booty, and—have never looked at it from that day to this, when it is lying before me.

In this instance the secret of delight lay in the unexpected—the contrast between the gorgeous Queen of the Adriatic, which gave this venerable volume birth, and the little grey town on the dreary northern seaboard where it found a rest for its old age. How came it there? Had it been the solace of some coach traveller—Bishop Po-

cocke, belike—left by him on his Scottish travels? If so, where had he picked it up? Why, to trace the various owners since first these sheets came damp from the press, and to know all about them, would be to learn the history of Western Europe since the Middle Ages. After all, the most likely solution was that the book had formed part of a country minister's library, and had found its way to the hammer when the good man went to his place.

Many an exciting chase has started from the book-shelves of a country-house. You dawdle in there after breakfast; your host, who makes the library his business-room, has betaken himself to a country council meeting; the men have gone a-shooting, and you have the prospect of undisturbed possession till luncheon-time at least. Now it is a constant, and by no means an unfruitful, feature of country-house libraries that the bulk of the books belong to one period. Perhaps one of your host's predecessors has been bookish, and put up cases for current literature; or else the necessity for filling the shelves has produced, at the time the house was built or the library furnished, a stock of volumes purchased nearly at the same time. That brings the subject neatly within the limits of your morning's prowl. I spent a forenoon lately in a well-ordered little library which fulfilled somebody's aspiration:—

Where the Rudyards cease from kipling,
And the Haggards ride no more.

Not a single volume seemed to have been added to the collection since 1833, but it was well stocked with the literature of the first quarter of the century. This house, by the bye, had some sombre associations. Standing above, and well within a mile of, the sea, the site had been so chosen, of deliberate purpose, that not a glimpse of the sea could be had from any of its windows. It was built when the family moved from a far older house, which stands now, a weather-wasted ruin, on the very verge of a beetling cliff, against which the green Atlantic surges growl

and roar continually. They show you a window, looking upon the sea, out of which, more than a century and a half ago, fell a child, heir to the estate, and was dashed to pieces a hundred feet below. The mother could never thereafter endure the sight or sound of the tide, and persuaded her husband to desert the old home, and build a new one whence the sea could neither be seen nor heard.

It is tantalizing when there are more than a limited number of books in private hands, for they are seldom kept in convenient array. A few weeks ago, however, I found myself in a large country-house in the Midlands, where the condition of the library is truly ideal. It is disposed in a long gallery, rather than a room, running the entire length of one side of the house on the ground floor. In addition to that there are book-shelves in almost every room in the house; the bachelors' attics, especially, are rich in them from floor to ceiling; in all there cannot be less than eighteen or twenty thousand volumes. There is no regular librarian, indeed, which might seem indispensable to the right herding of such a numerous flock; but the parish-schoolmaster is a bibliophile, and devotes his leisure hours to watching over it, and writing up the catalogue.

It is a good thing to have an object of pursuit; in fact, without it a large library like this is rather a wilderness, except to the owner who knows his way about it. But it is delightful to prowl round and pitch on any title which seems to bear, however remotely, on the subject before you. One is sure in following it up to light upon all kinds of alluring bypaths, and one is often indemnified for the time lost in following these, not by anything new, for "he that has read Shakespeare through with attention will perhaps find little new in this crowded world," but by unexpected bits of amusement or knowledge.

Such was my lot on a morning lately spent in this library. I had undertaken some work connected with the

sporting literature of the early part of the present century. Nobody who has not tried it would believe what a lot of rubbish this means to sample. Eighty years ago, field-sports were only beginning to be pastimes for cultivated men; even fox-hunting—the sport of kings—hardly lived in literature till Nimrod began his famous letters to the "Sporting Magazine." Fingering a small volume of essays, dated 1815 to 1819, in boards of that unapproachably ugly grey which is forever hallowed by association with the first editions of the Waverley Novels, Byron's poems, and innumerable other masterpieces, my eye was arrested by the title of a paper "On Field Sports." This proved to be, not, as had been too likely, a mixture of feeble rhapsody and stale description, of those interminable colloquies between a duffer and an expert which are insupportable from any hand less honored than Izaak Walton's, but a vigorous refutation in good plain English of the charge of cruelty made against sport.

Whenever I see a wood full of hares and pheasants in summer, I rejoice that, for the sake of two days' carnage in winter, men have consented to give life and enjoyment to so many beautiful and peaceful animals.

Herein is a perfect answer to those who denounce as guilt all bloodshed in sport; who not only take on them Wordsworth's vow—

Never to mix their pleasure or their pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that
feels—

but seek to impose it on everybody else.

It is better, says the sportsman, that certain creatures should be propagated and preserved during the greater part of the year, and killed under chivalrous conditions during the remaining months, than that protection should be withdrawn, and total extermination inevitably follow. Here is how this author imagines a fox might address the ultra-humanitarians after the abolition of hunting:—

Formerly we were allowed six months in the year to gain our livelihood, and bring up our families in quiet: many of us, it is true, were destroyed in the course of the winter; but that was the fortune of war, and the enemy did not beat up our quarters more than half a dozen times in the whole year. Upon the whole, we lived a pleasant life—short and disturbed, perhaps, yet safe from trap and gun, and in the midst of plenty; but now that you have interfered, with your humanity, there has come out a general order to shoot and destroy us wherever we may be found, till our ancient family is exterminated. And this is out of your special kindness!

Seventy-eight years ago this essay was written, and if we, who believe in the legitimacy of field-sports, have found no better reasons for their support, neither have our opponents improved their principles of attack.

Not having been aware that the dispute was such a venerable one, I became curious to identify the author of the volume:¹ therefore, as my business next day happened to lie with the present representative of the venerable firm who published it, I put it in my pocket and asked for the information. It required some research, which he obliged me by undertaking; but when obtained, it was not without interest. The "Gentleman who has left his Lodgings" turns out to have been Lord John Russell, whose early ambition for a place among the poets is perhaps better known than his excursions in prose. Acquaintance with the subsequent career of the author gives piquancy to certain passages in a paper on Political Economy, notably with those referring to the corn duties:—

It is very easy to say that the trade in corn ought to be free, like any other trade, and that if your farmers cannot grow corn so cheap as the foreign farmers, they ought to let it alone. But . . . when you are told that many millions of capital have been laid out, and many

¹ *Essays and Sketches of Life and Character. By a Gentleman who has left his Lodgings.* London: Longman, Hurst & Co., 1820.

hundred thousand people bred and employed, on the presumption that the growth of corn would continue to be protected by law; when it is stated to you that the taxes are so heavy in this country [this essay is dated 1819, when agricultural depression was beginning to be acutely felt, owing to the fall in prices after the war] and so light in other countries, that the effect of a free importation of corn would be the ruin of all the farmers, the conversion of the people entirely into manufacturers, and the consequent dependence of the whole nation on the commercial laws, and even the caprices, of foreign nations, you must own that you have a knotty question to decide.

But the most interesting of these essays are those which reflect the social habits of the metropolis when George IV. became king. London in those days was pent within what we should consider very moderate bounds. Greater London, instead of four millions, contained in 1820 just one million and a quarter inhabitants; while the part of the town described in Lord John's paper, "Society in London," actually lay between Green and Hyde Parks on the west and Regent Street and Spring Gardens on the east. The proverbial snipe still attracted sportsmen to the marshy flats of Belgravia, and Tyburnia was devoted to dairy-farms and market-gardens. Chelsea and Kensington remained remote suburbs, while Paddington and Westbourne were no more than rural villages. Practically the people of whom Lord John undertakes to describe the habits lived in Portman Square, Mayfair and St. James's, with a sprinkling in Westminster, and one would have supposed that to be a convenient radius for easy intercourse. But no; the burden of the writer's complaint is precisely the same as one hears, only surely with more reason, at the present day:—

"To love some persons very much, and see often those that I love," says the old Duchess of Marlborough, "is the greatest happiness I can enjoy." But in London it is equally difficult to get to love anybody very much, or to see often those

that we have loved before. There are such numbers of acquaintances, such a succession of engagements, that the town resembles Vauxhall, where the dearest friends may walk round and round all night without ever meeting. If you see at dinner a person whose manners and conversation please you, you may wish in vain to become more intimate; for the chance is that you will not meet so as to converse a second time for three months, when the dice-box of society may perhaps turn up again the same numbers. . . . Hence it is that those who live in London are totally indifferent to one another; the waves follow so quick that any vacancy is immediately filled up, and the want is not perceived. . . . We hear continually such conversations as the following: "Ah! how d'y'e do? I'm delighted to see you! How is Mrs. M—?" "She is very well, thank you." "Has she any more children?" "Any more! I have only been married three months. I see you are talking of my former wife—she has been dead these three years." Or: "My dear friend, how d'y'e do?—you have been out of town some time; where have you been?—in Norfolk?" "No; I have been two years in India."

On the whole, it is rather reassuring to follow this young moralist in his mournful musing. We have all felt the oppression of too large an acquaintance, of the crush and bustle which separates friends; and we have all cast back regretful glances to a time when we believed the town was not too big or too full for leisurely intercourse. We have sighed over the description of wits and foremost men who exchanged repartee and uttered quotable sayings across Sam Rogers's breakfast-table, little imagining, perhaps, that these very persons were comparing their own social opportunities discontentedly with the good old times when pamphleteers, playwrights, poets and lexicographers foregathered in the exhilarating frowsiness of the coffee-house. Railways have been badly blamed for the present congestion, yet here we have a young fellow of seven-and-twenty, with all the best houses in London open to him, and with time at his own disposal, declar-

ing, nearly twenty years before the first railway was opened from London, that for all intellectual or social enjoyment the town was impossible. "The friendships of London," he exclaims, "contain nothing more tender than a visiting-card." Even relations are practically inaccessible, owing to their numerous engagements; and in describing his failure to find them at home, Lord John affords an interesting glimpse of the fashionable hours in his youth:—

If you go to see them at one o'clock, they are not up; at two the room is full of indifferent acquaintances; . . . at three they are gone shopping; at four they are in the Park; at five and six they are out; at seven they are dressing; at eight they are dining with two dozen friends; at nine and ten the same; at eleven they are dressing for the ball; and at twelve, when you are going to bed, they are gone into society for the evening.

Now, this little snap-shot at society has, in its main features, much that might have been reflected from the routine of last season. The average London dinner-hour at the present day is not half an hour later than it was in 1820, nor, as I had imagined, did balls begin any earlier at the close of the Georgian era. Nevertheless, there are two or three salient differences between the two epochs. There is no mention of early riding, which is really one of the most remarkable and healthy characteristics of our *jeunesse dorée* of both sexes. On those very rare occasions when the force of circumstances is irresistible and I find myself in a ball-room, not less out of keeping with the scene than an erratic glacial block in a green meadow, next morning I feel like nothing so much (to continue the geological figure) as an alluvial deposit. Certainly matutinal horse-exercise seems the last restorative to present itself. Yet the early stroller at any hour from eight to ten of a fine summer morning may see shiny-coated hacks, many of them with side-saddles, standing at the doors of mansions in Belgravia or Mayfair; and if he

wait till their riders appear, he will fail to detect in those bright eyes and roseate cheeks any trace of that inevitable "chippiness" which so surely racks the unpractised ball-goer. Lord John Russell's young friends lay abed till midday: ours come out with the morning papers.

There was no five o'clock tea; but let that pass. I am not writing *virginibus puerisque*, but for people of mature, or perhaps a trifle *plus quam* mature, years and judgment. There was a much more ominous void in the day's arrangements. *There was no luncheon*—at least for men.

The first inconvenience of a London life is the late hour of dinner. To pass the day *impransus*, and then to sit down to a great dinner at eight o'clock, is entirely against the first dictates of common-sense and—common stomachs. [Agreed, agreed!] Women, however, are not so irrational as men in London, and generally sit down to a substantial luncheon at three or four [*italics ours*]: if men would do the same, the meal at eight might be lightened of many of its weighty dishes, and conversation would be no loser; for it is not to be concealed that conversation suffers great interruption from the manner in which English dinners are managed. First the host and hostess (or her unfortunate coadjutor) are employed during three parts of dinner in doing the work of the servants, helping fish, or carving large pieces of venison to twenty hungry souls. . . . Much time is also lost by the attention everyone is obliged to pay in order to find out (which he never can do if he is short-sighted) what dishes are at the other end of the table. If a guest wishes for a glass of wine, he must peep through the Apollos and Cupids of the *plateau*, in order to find some one to drink with him; otherwise he must wait till some one asks him, which will probably happen in rapid succession, so that after having had no wine for half an hour, he will have to drink five glasses in five minutes.

One might spend a great deal more time over these sketches, traced by one who thoroughly understood what he was writing about. Novelists, hitherto, have shunned George IV.'s reign

with curious unanimity; when they turn to it they will doubtless find that men and women were curiously like those of other epochs, and Lord John Russell's papers will form a most valuable handbook to the manners and tone of good society in the 'twenties.

Before replacing this book on its shelf, let me note two or three observations by this thoroughbred and thorough-paced Whig on more serious matters.

The perpetual bugbear of his party was the power of the Crown; in fact it had been the dread of the preponderance of that estate to which the Whigs owed their birth. This dread, remote as it may appear in our eyes, was very present in 1819 to the apprehensions of the future prime minister, and he reckoned up anxiously "what the Crown has gained upon liberty during this reign" (George III.'s). He complained that the sanguinary excesses of the French Revolution had been greatly exaggerated in order to inflame the public mind against the slightest indulgence of the popular right of meeting and discussion, and that the royal prerogative had been augmented by the increase of the national war-debt. It is hardly worth following this nascent statesman into his warning against risks which are not likely to recur in this country. Their disappearance has removed the last objection to the amalgamation of the Whig "Left centre" with the Conservative "Right." For tactical purposes it has been decided to maintain the Liberal Unionist organization distinct from that of the Conservatives, out of deference to those electors (surely only a handful) who would demur to voting for a party that was once Tory. But the Tory bugbear is as unreal now as that of the power of the Court. There is only one Tory in politics now—all honor to him!—that gallant Yorkshireman, the Right Hon. James Lowther, the sole exponent of the "extreme Right."

A parting glance at Lord John's pages reveals a statement of peculiar significance at a time when an impor-

tant class of our artisans have been induced by their leaders to sacrifice a million or so in wages and squander another half-million in strike-pay, in the attempt to secure an eight hours' day for London engineers:—

An intelligent manufacturer, who travelled to ascertain the state of manufactures in France, found that the main difference between that country and England was—that the English workmen worked many more hours than the French.

If that is the way our commercial supremacy was attained, it suggests certain reflections about the surest way of losing it.

Very different is the next book that comes to hand; as an edition, not so old as the other by more than forty years, but in composition its senior by nearly a thousand. It is a collection of Anglo-Saxon treatises on medicine, admirably edited by Mr. Oswald Cockayne for the Records series;¹ and one turns to it indolently to see what mad or blind pranks our forefathers played with their constitutions, and to thank God that we are not such blockheads as they. In truth, many of the remedies prescribed seem worse than the diseases they professed to cure: unspeakably nasty, some of them, directing how the filthiest things on earth were to be pounded together and mixed with the patient's meat and drink, in a manner of which the slightest acquaintance with bacteriology and the history of internal parasites enables us to perceive the terrible danger; irresistibly ludicrous others, as when wise Abbot Ælfrie (for he *was* wise in many things) directs as a remedy for headache a salve composed of forty-four "worts" or plants, and the fat or bones of fourteen animals, to be rubbed on after repeating the Creed, the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and the prayer of the Four Evangelists.

¹ Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England, collected and edited by the Rev. Oswald Cockayne. Three vols. 1864-66.

Ælfrie, of course, was only repeating what had been handed down to him from pagan forebears—*plus* the Christian anthems and prayers; nor were these pagan forebears, perhaps, so simple as we may suppose. The Germanic colonists, who proved strong enough to relegate the Keltic tribes of Britain to the "fringe" they still enjoy, had not been wanting in brains. Their chief deity was Woden—a name cognate with our "wit" and "wisdom"—they worshipped him as the Almighty Wit—the Supreme Intelligence. To Thor—the mighty Thunderer—was assigned inferior rank to Woden—brute force they never imagined as a match for intellect. It is true they were of the same Teutonic stem which had overthrown the culture of Rome, and violently checked the current of civilization for nearly a thousand years; it is true that we, their descendants, are wont to use their names—Goths and Vandals—to typify everything that is brutal and ignorant and coarse. Yet even among these Germans there were a few who were careful to preserve and hand down some of the ancient learning. They studied, and even translated, many works of Greek and Latin writers, and much of their leech-craft was derived from Hippocrates, Æsculapius and Plato. But the ingenious and delicate surgical instruments, of which such a variety have been unearthed at Herculaneum and Pompeii, were unknown to them, or, if known, their use had been forgotten: surgical and medical science had to be reconstructed from the foundation.

One instrument, and one only, seems to have been common to all ages—the lancet. Down to fifty or sixty years ago blood-letting was indiscriminately prescribed and universally believed in. I possess a folio account-book of an ancestor who flourished when the eighteenth century was still young—most entertaining reading, by reason of his having made it a kind of journal also. Regularly, every spring and autumn for many years, recurs an entry such as this:—

To a chirurgeon, for bleeding my wife,
Peggy, and me, and for giving
Peggy a vomit 28l.

Peggy was the worthy gentleman's daughter, and the fee was in Scots money.

The Saxons used the lancet at frightful haphazard, except that they were positive about the right time of year. In an old leech-book written by one Cild (probably only a clerk writing from dictation) for the Abbey of Glas-tonbury, much stress is laid on the risk of blood-letting fifteen nights before Lammas (August 1st) and after it for five-and-thirty nights, because the "lyft" (air) is then most impure. Herein is a trace of Mediterranean lore, from a latitude where men had learnt to dread the sirocco. But there is an appalling vagueness in directions for the operation:—

Let him blood from the left arm from the upper vein; if thou canst not find that (*gif thu tha findan ne mæge*), from the midmost vein; if thou canst not find that, then from the head vein. Further, if that cannot be found, let blood from the left hand, from a vein near the little finger. If the blood be very red or livid, then must it be let more plentifully; if it be clean or clear, let it so much the less.

Evidently this eminent surgeon did not know the vital difference between arterial and venous blood, and his diagnosis was based on the quality of the blood, differing accordingly as he had tapped a vein or an artery!

It is horrible to think that blood-letting was pronounced indispensable in the "half-dead addle," as the Anglo-Saxons called paralysis, in order to draw forth the poisonous humors from the patient. This theory of humors died very hard in medicine; it drove bravely through the eighteenth century.

There was, of course, no distinction till long after the Norman Conquest between surgeons and physicians: though the use of the catheter, the probe, the dioptra and the forceps, all known to practitioners in classical times, had been forgotten, anybody

could handle knife and saw. Therefore the directions are of the simplest how to proceed "if thou wilt carve off or lop off a limb from a body" (*gif thu wille lim acorran othe asmithan*).

From time to time one stumbles on a bit of sound and solid sense, as when the writer is prescribing remedies for loss of appetite—a terrible calamity to overtake people from whom we derive our own unrivalled proficiency with knife and fork. A Saxon lord who refused his victuals must indeed, it was thought, be in parlous case—probably possessed of a devil or two; consequently a great variety of recipes are given to restore the appetite, among them one which looks curiously modern—"Let them seek for themselves fatigue in riding on horseback, or in a wain as much as they can endure." Carriage exercise in a springless wain meant a more rigorous experience than a drive in Hyde Park on rubber tyres.

After all, the leeches of those days were not such fools as we are inclined to pronounce them. They wrote very foolish prescriptions, and some very nasty ones, but how much of them all did they believe? Is there any fashionable physician in London at this moment who will declare on his honor that he relies as much on the resources of the pharmacopœia as on the faith of his patients? How many modern doctors have the courage, when they recommend regimens rather than drugs, to reply as the famous Jephson did to Lady Londonderry? "Sir," she asked, scandalized at the severe simplicity of his orders, "do you know whom you're speaking to?" "Yes ma'am; to an old woman with a disordered stomach." The Saxon leeches had very hazy ideas about the properties or herbs: it was certain, anyhow, that they had some properties, and the popular notion was that herbs were essential to any cure, so they complied with it, and added a lot of fantastic observances—partly *ex tempore*, and partly derived from the world-wide and world-old doctrines of the Magi. Doubtless these complicated instructions contributed to convalescence. It

requires little knowledge of human nature to perceive that a Saxon thane, suffering from prolonged over-feeding, would think very cheaply of the leech who ordered him to go bumping about on an underbred hack or jolting for miles in a farm-cart: it was necessary to invent decoctions—the more nauseous the better—to beguile the patient's imagination. In short, leeches were *expected* to administer herb-potions, for such was the tradition of leechcraft from wiser times: the properties of the various herbs had been forgotten during ages of anarchy, and the science had to be slowly recovered.

Leeches did not hesitate to go beyond the vegetable kingdom in order to influence powerfully the minds of their patients. There is nothing that affects the imagination more violently than cruelty, and cruel some of these recipes undoubtedly are. Cataract, about the nature of which the leeches can have known absolutely nothing, was to be treated in this way. Catch a fox alive, cut out his tongue, and let him go; dry the tongue, sew it in a red cloth, and hang it round the patient's neck. As a precaution against pestilence, take a live badger and beat out his teeth, put them in a linen bag, and wear them next the body. For jaundice the sovereign remedy is indeed a terrible one: you are to take the head of a mad dog, pound it, mix it with wine, and drink it.

It is sad to think that in the centuries since Pliny and Lucian mocked at the Magi, all this rubbish had been allowed to accumulate and impede the ascent of man. The work had all to be done over again. Pliny had declared that of all earthly systems the doctrines of the Magi were the most fraudulent—not stupid, but fraudulent; yet even he inclined to believe that the popular notion could not be altogether groundless that a man by eating roast hare improved his looks for nine days. "Born a goddess, dullness never dies." Be assured, it is far from dead yet. It lurks in privy places, waiting for some dislocation of our prodigious progress, some clouding

of our splendid enlightenment, to spread its pall upon our faculties.

Sometimes one comes on a sample of it when least expecting anything of the sort. The man is still alive (and one of the most intelligent and upright of his class that I ever knew) who once recommended me, as a cure for sty in the eye, to gather nine thorns from a gooseberry-bush, burn eight of them to ashes, and prick the sty with the ninth. In another instance, which happened in my own parish within the last five-and-twenty years, may be recognized that principle of propitiation by sacrifice which lies at the base of all religion and its corruption—superstition. A certain farmer very well known to me, whose social standing may be understood from the fact that he was an elder of the kirk and paid about £300 a year in rent, wishing to rid his cattle of the disease known as "blackleg," caused a calf or stirk to be buried alive. Many persons were present at the ceremony, including the local veterinary surgeon!

It will be observed that this propitiatory notion, which runs through so much ordinary folk-lore, has very little place in these Anglo-Saxon prescriptions, most of which are purely empirical and arbitrary. It appears, indeed, in the directions quoted above for curing cataract, and in some of the recipes for the bite of a mad dog; but, as a rule, the cure was supposed to depend on the virtues of specified ingredients, modified sometimes by the hour of the day or the age of the moon. A few of these ingredients—mustard, aloes, colchicum, ginger, saffron, sulphur, mercury, etc.—remain in the modern pharmacopœia: their use had been well known to oriental and Roman physicians; their tradition had been preserved, but all understanding of their true properties had been lost in the general wreck of learning.

Sometimes the Saxon name actually preserved the true use of a wort—which had been perverted to other and probably futile purposes. Thus *Delphinium staphisagria*, staves-acre, was known to the Saxons as louse-bane, yet

they recommended a drink of it to correct evil humors of the body. At this day there is no such sovereign cure for vermin in a dog's coat. Among herbs that may be reckoned neutral in effect, betony was ever a prime favorite; in the herbarium of Apuleius it is recommended for no less than twenty-nine separate ailments—for toothache, for sore eyes, for a broken head, for stomach-ache, for fatigue after "mickle riding or mickle ganging," for indigestion ("if thou wilt that thy meat melt easily"), for bite of an adder or a mad dog, for sore throat, or for "foot-addle" (gout). Hardly less popular was waybread (plantain), which must at least have furnished a harmless draught, disposing the patient to give an easy rein to his imagination.

Physicians, audaciously laying claim to superior powers, easily came to get credit for them, and became known as "doctors"—more learned than the common folk. Some of them were so bold as to pretend to skill in many things beyond medicine. A curious medley of charms borrowed from the Magi and Christian prayers is associated with vivid scenes of early English pastoral life. Thus when a man had lost his cattle, which must have been a common occurrence in an unfenced country, the natural assumption was that some evil-doer had driven them off. He was directed to say his prayers three times to each quarter of the heavens, and then cry: "The Jews hung up Christ; they did of deeds the worst; they did that they could not hide. So may this deed be no wise hidden, through the Holy Rood of Christ."

Prayers became just as much ingredients in prescriptions as any drug; and it was considered important that, like drugs, they should be "exhibited" in proper proportions. Hence a table of equivalents was prepared as follows:—

One mass was reckoned equal to twelve days' fasting.

Ten masses were reckoned equal to four months' fasting.

Twenty masses were reckoned equal to eight months' fasting.

Thirty masses were reckoned equal to twelve months' fasting.

One psalm was reckoned equal to one day's fasting.

One hundred and twenty psalms were reckoned equal to twelve months' fasting.

Happy the patient or criminal who could afford to pay for having psalms and masses sung!

Christianity, by the time it reached the pagan Saxons, had lost its pristine purity, and the light it shed on the physical world had become tinged with earth-born rays. The Saxon convert was free to retain the fixed belief of his fathers in the presence everywhere of incorporeal spirits—evil and good. For him the forest-glade or river-cliff was still the haunt of the dreaded wood-mare, as he called the echo; and we have retained the term by which he personified the visitation apt to follow too generous a supper—a nightmare.

And thus men blundered on, using prayers and charms and herbs, sometimes hitting on something really useful and adding it to the store of real knowledge. After all, we owe these venerable quacks something. *Somebody* had to begin the ascent: the lowest steps on the stair were very dimly lighted, and the first to set foot on them stumbled and wandered in a way we are apt to think supremely ridiculous; but no height could be gained without the help of these. Nothing is attained in science *per saltum*; little by little, line upon line, as progress made, till the light increases and the view broadens. In musing upon the lucubrations of these pioneers in leechcraft, one is disposed rather to admire the good purpose to which they put the dull wits of their patients, than to hold them up to derision for the preposterous remedies they prescribed. They were the Beechams and the Carters of the tenth century, and, on the whole, produced literature more interesting than our nineteenth-century empirics.

From *The Cornhill Magazine*.
A THEORY OF TALK.

Nowadays the arts of life have many prophets among us. Newspapers, magazines and books pour upon us floods of suggestions: what we should think, what we should drink, what we should eat, how we should be clothed, how we should grow rich, and what we should do with our money; I remember even a successful dissertation upon the art of breathing. But, curiously enough, upon the most important of all life's arts, the most envied and most enviable of all accomplishments, our monitors are generally silent. They do not instruct us how we should talk, or what we should talk about. At the very most they claim to supply topics for conversation; though they are more often fruitful in the very subjects which conversation ought to avoid. Of course, there are exceptions to this general silence; some brilliant like Stevenson, some the reverse like Professor Mahaffy, a good talker who has written a very indifferent "Art of Conversation." Stevenson's admirable essay is, for him, curiously devoid of practical precepts; other books—for instance, a recently published "Art of Conversing" signed in the most inviting way by a member of the aristocracy—lapse into mere manuals of behavior. But, avoiding any suggestion of academic principles or conventional rules, and considering talk as it exists between people who have some usage of life, who have experiences to compare, and are not afraid of their own voices, it should be possible to set down a few reflections, which might afford to the average reader at least the pleasure of having somebody to differ with; and that is very often what we seek, not merely in books, but in human society.

Do you remember the reason—one of La Rochefoucauld's prettiest discoveries—why lovers never bore each other? It is because they always talk about themselves. We cannot all be lovers—perhaps we do not want to be; but we all want to avoid being bores or bored, and here is pointed out the way of salvation. One might almost lay it down in a series of aphorisms. But, first of

all, we must evidently dismiss, banish, hiss off and utterly explode the old precept, instilled into our childhood, that it was very bad manners and very wearisome to talk about ourselves. If you are being bored yourself, you are probably boring the other person. In other words, in order to talk well, you must be interested in what you are talking of; and everybody who is interested in anything is interested in himself or herself. It is therefore much better to talk boldly and undisguisedly about yourself than to make talk on an indifferent subject. In the former case you run a risk; in the latter you are certain to achieve nothing but dullness. To talk about one's self is all very well when the listener is content to be a listener; and the world is happily full of persons who desire to be talked to, rather than to talk. But your listener may have competing ambitions; in which case you will come under the definition given by a witty professor. "I mean by a bore," he said, "some one who insists upon talking about himself when I want to talk about myself."

Of course, one is using the word "self" in its widest application: a man, his whole interests and experiences; a woman and her dress. A man's self resides principally in his work or his play; if he talks of himself, it means generally that he tells you of his career in the House of Commons, or of his big days on a Scotch lough. A woman's existence is far more centred in her emotions, and you cannot well talk to her—not, at least, without some danger—about them; but dress is the means which has been allotted to her for the expression of her charming personality—she dresses to illustrate the conception which she has of herself. In many cases her choice of a gown reflects a mood. If you know why a particular woman wears a particular dress on a given occasion, you know a good deal about her. The knowledge may be embarrassing, because there are many dresses which testify to an expectation of being bored; but it is always interesting knowledge. There are, of course, plenty of women to whom the problem

of how to dress is just what it seems to the average man—an effort to clothe one's self in a way that will not excite remark. But these women are either absolutely dull, devoid of that vivid interest in life which makes a person agreeable to be with, or else they are preoccupied with something else, and project the self in another direction. In the latter case, talk, if it be wisely guided, will fly from all question of colors, and soft or severe draperies, to seek the genuine aspirations and the central thoughts of the pair engaged in talk.

All this applies only to talk between two people; but more than half of conversation is *tête-à-tête*, and that portion includes ninety-nine hundredths of all the interesting talk that one hears. Even when talk in general has been excellent, when one carries away from it a permanent impression, it is, as a rule, because some one dominant individual has displayed his personality before the assembly. One has seen a man do this, airing his qualities like a peacock, magnificently self-conscious, unchallengeable in the prestige of his splendor. Even a man can sometimes do it, and how much oftener a woman? But for the ordinary individual, who does not seek to dazzle a circle, it is enough to concentrate one attention at the time; and to do that, you must talk of something that touches you so closely as to be really part of yourself.

Let us lay it down, then, that in talk, if you wish to interest, you must talk of yourself; if you wish to be interested, you must get other people to talk of themselves. In conversation there is always a give and take. Some prefer to give and some to take; but give, as well as take, there must always be on both sides. You must make some return if you wish to play the listener; in exchange for the personality which the talker imparts, you must be ready to impart some of your own. Talk is not in most cases an exchange of ideas, still less—Heaven defend us—of facts; it is really an interchange of sympathies.

Suppose an average intelligent man and woman in an average drawing-

room, either drawn by mutual attraction or compelled by superior mandate to converse to one another, how are they to pass their time agreeably? The first requisite, one may observe, is a mechanical one, and too often not forthcoming. There can be no conversation between persons who are not approximately on the same level; the problem, how a man standing is to discourse pleasantly with a woman seated in a low arm-chair, has, by innumerable and painful trials, been proved insoluble. He acquires a pain in his back; she, a crick in her neck; such is the upshot of that interview. But let us assume that both are standing, or that Providence is exceptionally kind and two seats are available; suppose also that they have a charitable host or hostess, who will allow a guest to fulfil Dr. Johnson's aspiration "to fold his legs and have his talk out;" what is the recipe for an agreeable conversation? Are these two people, who have no particular information upon politics, to discuss the probable action of Germany? In other words, to collate their recollection of two or three leading articles? If you have the honor of discoursing to an influential editor, by all means draw him on European questions; they are part of himself, the product which it is his duty and his privilege to manufacture; but the rest of the world, according to their intelligence, see in these subjects merely an occasion to conceal or to parade their ignorance.

What is true of politics is true of all other special knowledge. Whether you wish to talk or to be talked to, subjects which do not affect the personal existence of the talkers should be avoided. People who know each other well do not need ingenuity in choice of topics; but very little ingenuity is needed even between strangers to keep upon something which has a possible bearing on yourselves. It is always safe, however slight the acquaintance, to talk to a man of what he has done, or to a woman of what she is going to do. There are certain things which touch every human being nearly. Old age is one of them; and that, like most of the others,

is very nearly certain to lead to the eternal and eternally fascinating subject of sex.

But it is impossible to lay down rules *in vacuo*; everything must be left to the individual discretion, or rather to the joint discretion—especially the moment when to be indiscreet. You must know, by a set of invisible feelers stretched out after the impalpable, when is the moment to advance a little in intimacy—which are the people who like to confide, and which like to be confided in. Most men and most women are flattered if somebody who has a sympathetic manner tells them one of the little things which the hearer feels would not be told just to all the world; and many men and many women enjoy nothing more than to talk intimately about themselves to some one who will never laugh at the wrong moment, and will understand what is only half said. Except when absolute perfect understanding is established—and how often is understanding perfect and absolute, even between husband and wife?—there is always, in any talk that is not merely from the lips outside, this groping after the unexplored—this probing into the recesses of another consciousness.

Talk between people who meet for the first time, or who talk together for the first time, has an exciting quality which gradually evaporates. Each sets out on a voyage of discovery in a new country; the voyage has the charm of the unfamiliar, if only by making one display a new aspect of one's self. The long fireside talks between intimates, the endless conversation of a day's walk with your friend, are like the hills or fields where you were born: good to look forward to, good to look back on, renewing your life from its sources; but the mind is never excited by them, it is not stamped with the crispness of new impressions. Yet between man and woman the freshness of life never wholly wears off; the unforeseen is always opening up in new vistas. "What? is that how it looks to you? To all women?" "Oh, the strange thing to be a man and not understand these things!"

The really good talker is the person who pursues with most avidity this continual exploration; who is equally ready to give or take, and is always intolerant of the dull and insignificant; who insists upon talking only of realities; who is able to bring any topic into vital relation with the people talking, or, in default of that, to slide into some topic where interest is possible for both. The essence of the thing is sympathy and a quick responsiveness; a keen zest in the business of finding out what other people are like, and how the world looks to them; and that instinctive sense of individual human differences, which enables the talker to divine what will interest a particular associate. For the good talker does not converse with words only; he sees when the eye grows dull and when it brightens, he follows all the subtle indications. "*He*," one says for convenience; but in this matter women are best; the best listeners, and the best to lead the talk into the right channel. A man is too apt to talk to any one person—especially in talking to men—as he would to any other; not to let the personality of others affect his talk. There are men even who talk to women just as they would to men. There are also women who say that they like men to talk to them as if they were men; but they do not really like it. Naturally they like to be talked to as reasonable beings, not as inferiors in intellect; but they are not men, and they should not be talked to as men. The perfection of talk is always between man and woman, for each has got a point of view which is unattainable to the other, and must, therefore, be permanently interesting. Every man must wonder what it feels like to be a woman; every woman must wonder how things strike a man. More than this: upon the inherent attraction between the sexes is based the whole ceremonial of courteous homage which should somehow make its presence felt in every word that a man says to a woman—and this ceremonial none but the barbarous would wish to destroy. To mark it, without emphasizing it, in talk is a real art; indeed, all fine shades

that go to make up good manners have their counterpart in conversation. It is not easy for a young man to hit the precise tone of talk with his elders and betters. To be cavalier with them is detestable; yet one should know how to suggest deference without appearing to treat them as old fogies.

The excellence of talk is relative—what would be very good talk in the small hours is very bad talk over afternoon tea. As a general rule, nobody should venture on theology before midnight; after that hour, for some occult reason, one is apt to drift towards it. The afternoon is essentially a frivolous period, when work is done and we unbend before bracing ourselves again to the task of dinner. Of course, one is not talking of the afternoon as it appears to ladies who have a round of visits to accomplish. For them the great dictum of Miss Deborah in "*Cranford*" still holds good: "Never let your visit exceed a quarter of an hour, my dear!" "But, Miss Deborah, what if I should grow interested in the conversation, and forget to go away?" "Never talk of anything, my dear, that could tempt you to forget the quarter of an hour." People who come with a fixed determination to go away at a certain moment cannot possibly talk; they can make conversation, and unhappily they do; the vicious habit has depraved their whole sex. There is no reason in Nature why women should be less amusing than men; but the inferiority is obvious. Take the simplest instance. Thirty or forty men will meet at seven o'clock, dine together, and pass the evening very agreeably till midnight. Everybody likes to be asked to such functions. Imagine thirty or forty women called upon to do the same; would they be able to amuse themselves? If they would, why do they not do it? Catechise a frank lady upon the half-hour after dinner, while the men are over their cigarettes; she will tell you that nearly always it is a period of watching and waiting. The fact is, that the vice of talking to make talk, and not to interest or be interested, has entered into their very souls, and only the careful and intelligent among

them eradicate the taint. Women have learnt to be talked to, but not to originate talk. They have been taught by their mothers from childhood that they must never talk about themselves; that discretion is the better part of conversation; and that the one thing essential is to be insignificant, because, if you mean nothing, you never will be misunderstood; whereas if you get into the habit of exciting yourself over talk, you may hurt somebody's feelings or shock somebody's nerves, and you may not remember to go away at the end of twenty minutes. All this formality is simply fatal to talk; because, in order to talk so that you will interest, or in order to show that you are interested, you must produce something of your own personality; you must prove that the thing has a personal bearing for you.

Another form of nonsense carefully instilled into the mind of youth is the precept that one should not talk about persons. This engaging maxim assumes that to talk of one's friends means talking scandal about them. Happily no warning is more universally disregarded; but why give the warning? Why not say rather, "By all means talk about people, but talk about them intelligently and charitably?" What on earth should men and women talk about, if not men and women? The proper study of mankind is man; his more delightful, if less proper, study is woman; and one may perhaps assume the converse to hold good. Nobody wants to confine talk to personalities; it is quite reasonable to talk of abstract subjects, not persons, if they interest you more; they will then be part of yourself. But, above all, be interested, and you will be interesting; only keep an eye on the other person, and know when to stop. The most blessed gift in conversation is the power to be interested; but if you cannot contrive to be interested in what is being talked of, then either go away or else try to put life into things by talking of something that interests you. The true genius is the person who, while giving, seems all the while to take; who can make a man feel not merely that he had been

amused, but that he has been amusing. A good laugh often contributes largely to this consummation; there is no possession more to be desired for a young man than a good laugh; not necessarily a loud laugh, but simply the power of showing that he is amused. The muscles of the face and the eyes can do it silently; but if there can be added to them also an agreeable noise, that is infinitely the better. Practically, an agreeable laugh is the best sign of good health and good spirits, and it communicates its tonic quality to everyone within earshot, even if they have not the sympathetic exhilaration of the joke. But if a good laugh is a treasure, the bad laugh is a curse. It is the most complete expression of vulgarity attainable by the human organs; and even when it is not vulgar it is irritating. A nervous laugh is almost worse than a twitch in the face; and the man who laughs before his joke ought really to undergo a course in the rhetoric of conversation.

That agreeable art has its professors, but we can only—by reason of our vanity—go to school to them when we are young. Women hold nearly all the chairs in this faculty; and, though they are faulty professors for their own sex—chiefly inculcating the odious quality of caution—they are simply invaluable to ours. No one has ever sufficiently praised the labors of the young woman of eight-and-twenty who has a mission for breaking in boys. She encourages them to talk to her on the one subject about which they have something to say—themselves; she teaches them how to say it nicely, with a pretty deference to her approbation; and she is in a position to rebuke them when they bore her. That is a rebuke which between equals cannot be administered, nor even suggested. No man has ever forgiven any woman for saying that he bored her, unless she recanted with all possible proofs of repentance. A woman will forgive anything; but this is perhaps the one insult which she can never by any possibility forget.

Nobody can teach a bad talker to be a good one, but he can by attention

learn to be less bad, and in his youth the kindness of such professors as we spoke of may do much to correct natural defects. The artist in conversation, like every other artist, is both born and made; an innate instinct—which is really a vital interest in things and persons—is cultivated in him to its appropriate use. Like Falstaff, he is not only witty himself, but the cause of wit in others. An intelligent man, even a man of genius, may from shyness or defective sympathy be a bad talker; but put him into the hands of a good talker, and he will be made to talk well—his personality will be extracted. No matter how bodiless and sapless may be the material in which he works—even if he is a mathematician or an astronomer—tact will draw out the human appeal in his lifelong energies and conquests. Nothing enlarges the sympathies like education; so the good talker must of necessity have a good, all-round education. But it is needless to say that the people who talk best are not those of the most recondite acquirements; observation, not book-lore, is the making of a good companion for all companies and all weathers.

The problem of every hostess—whom to bring together—is in itself a problem in talk. The genius in hospitality not only knows instinctively what is the connecting link of sympathy—the key to strike—between herself and a given person, but who the people are between whom such links will readily establish themselves. If she has complete confidence in the result, she will leave to her guests the entire pleasure of the voyage of discovery; if she is apprehensive, she will put them a step or two on the way by indicating some interest which she knows is common to them; and perhaps this is the safer method. If she wants general talk, and not people conversing in groups or couples, she will certainly have some one whom she can rely on—a man or a woman with a stimulating character and high animal spirits. One of the best qualities in such a stand-by is the propensity to trail his coat. A good fighter—one who will give and receive hard knocks with pleasure—is

invaluable; witness the strange case of Doctor Johnson, who, with everything on earth to make him intolerable, became the most successful of all talkers on the grand scale—not so much by the adroitness of his blows, as by his sheer delight in battle. Johnson never seems to have acted as a check to talk. One of the most intolerable contemporary types is the man who lies in wait to say something that will sting. In the heat of discussion nobody feels a blow from a rival combatant; it is the sudden stone from a silent outsider which causes resentment. But the whole case is admirably discussed by Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson, in the "Egoist," apropos of the dinner which Sir Willoughby spoils.

Conversation has its propitious hours, and it answers sympathetically to the moment. Women, one fancies, are best company for each other when they sit up and brush their hair together far into the night; for men—certainly for young men—the hours of pipe and whiskey, from eleven indefinitely onwards, are the time that one looks back upon with a fond regret. We may not have been very wonderful people when we were at college, but what good company we were for one another! In those days, too, breakfast was a meal one could loaf over and the morning an agreeable vacancy; but after college days who cares—who dares—to talk over breakfast? It is a thing to be gone through resolutely, or to be scrambled through, as the case may be; but in any case eloquence or sympathy is not in season. "I should like to marry a man who would be fascinating at breakfast," said a young lady. "My dear," replied her mentor, "be thankful if he is decently civil." In summer and the sunshine out of doors one does not talk; one is too busy existing. The ideal moment is by the fireside, before lamps are lighted, when the red glow is on faces, and men lie back in their arm-chairs, and women pull up close to the fender and draw their skirts tight over their knees. Then you get the sort of conversation in which you can afford to be silent, leaving the fire to fill up pauses;

and when all is considered, that is the best talk of all.

From The Westminster Review.
MEN'S WOMEN IN FICTION.

This title has a misleading sound: it seems to suggest a survey of the fascinations of the Cleopatra type who have exercised an influence, sometimes good, but more often bad, and always inexplicable to the female mind, over the so-called stronger sex; whereas the subject of this paper would be more accurately indicated by some such cumbrous heading as "Women as Depicted by Men in Fiction."

After a long career of novel reading, one is almost tempted to exclaim with an ancient writer: "One man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among all these have I not found." They are saints, or Jezebels, or monuments of obstinacy, or colorless, or a hundred other things; but they are hardly ever *women*.

Perhaps nothing in the world is harder than to write a book, especially a novel; if you think if it, it requires an almost superhuman attitude on the part of the writer. It must be hard enough when you know all about your subject, but when you know scarcely anything about it, which we may take to be the state of mind of most men with regard to women, it must require the courage of a Hercules, with, perhaps, something of his brute insensibility to what he was undertaking. For it may be asserted, without compromise, that men are bad judges of women's characters: they underrate them, or they overrate them, but they hardly ever judge them accurately. There are several causes which conduce to this inaccuracy, apart from the central fact that men are inherently bad judges.

One of these causes is that most men take their women ready-made, so to speak. Mankind has always found it easy to be witty at the expense of womankind, and we all know that

nothing is easier than to make things fit in with a preconceived idea. If any one doubts this, he should read Mark Twain's account of the poor old woman who turned out to be a queen; it would be difficult to find a more natural example. Some one once asserted that women were curious: we work back from this profound axiom, and find that Eve ate the apple from curiosity—Adam's lofty motives have been explained by Milton. Lot's wife looked round from curiosity; of course, having been a resident in the city, she could have no real interest in its fate. A few more examples of this kind have been collected, and the fact is proved beyond contestation. The same amazing penetration has regarded a virtue known as patience as a special attribute of women, and we find beautiful heroines called Griselda, or Amelia, or Sophia, held up to admiration on, apparently, no other ground than that they deliberately train men to be selfish, sensual, faithless, insolent bullies. Consequently a man who is making observations about women cannot start fair, but must assume that she possesses, by virtue of her sex, the stock virtues: capacity for sympathy in suffering of a legitimate kind, affectionateness, love of children, of needlework, and good works, and unselfishness; and the stock vices too: these are easier to enumerate, having been carefully catalogued by the wisdom of ages in a thousand epigrams, plays, novels and poems. They are, briefly, obstinacy, deceitfulness, unreasonableness, jealousy, spitefulness, curiosity, and an incapacity for holding the tongue. These, O women, are your inevitable burden; without these a man is unable to tabulate you.

Another cause is, doubtless, the habit of want of candor which long ages of tyranny have succeeded in stamping on the mind of woman: they are too apt to take the conventional valuation of themselves as the essential one, as a thing to be lived up to, and to assume a virtue—or a vice—if they have it not. Too many women, even honest ones,

seem to try to be different when they are with men, and in particular one cannot help noticing, even among educated women, a tendency to that foolish kind of flattery which consists in professing a degree of ignorance which does not exist, in order that the man may smile indulgently and feel his own superiority. Aggressive displays of knowledge are not to be admired, but this want of candor is a thing to be strongly protested against. You say, "Men like it:" what if they do? let them go to some one who is really as ignorant as you profess to be, and be happy with her. Besides, that is largely a popular fallacy, mere convention; we take exaggerated expression of momentary feeling for liberal utterance of permanent opinion, much as when people tell you, if you are unmusical, that Shakespeare says "The man that hath no music in his soul. . . . is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils," but Shakespeare does not say so: he makes little twopenny-half-penny emotional Lorenzo say it—and a very suitable sentiment it is for him—but Shakespeare does not say it. So Arthur Hugh Clough, in his "Bothie," represents his hero as making in different words the time-honored assertion that men love ignorance in women, but does any one believe that Clough lived up to this position? Anyhow, the present point is that it does not matter if men do like it: the business of women is to be candid, to show themselves as they are, and perhaps, in time, men will learn to be candid and natural too. But this comes too near the dangers of new-womanism, and it is not directly concerned with the subject.

It is also true that, from various causes, men have very few opportunities for really learning the characters of women, and they are too apt to deduce the general from the particular. A man has a wife who is hysterical and unreasonable, and he unhesitatingly asserts that these are characteristics of women; or she has no sense of humor, and he innocently supposes

that this is because she is a woman. He may know intimately at least one man with no sense of humor, but he does not argue that this is because he is a man. In regard to this last indictment, it must be frankly owned that there is something in it; though it is hard to have to make this concession to Thackeray. It may to some extent be inherent, but it is certain that many women deliberately stamp upon their sense of humor because they have a vague impression that it is not quite "nice;" they are afraid of being profane, or of laughing at something which ought to be too broad to amuse a woman. It is one of the results of the stock-in-trade theory, by which religion and propriety are insisted upon as requisites of the "eternal feminine."

Two such causes as these—want of candor in women, and of opportunities for observation in men—go far towards accounting for the deficiencies complained of in men's novels; but it is encouraging to think that both of them can be removed, and that the tendency of modern times is distinctly towards removing them. The other great cause to which allusion has been made—the too-ready acceptance of other people's crude theories—can also be done away with; but perhaps it may not be accounted unduly pessimistic to say that in this matter there is less cause for hope.

Let us examine a few of the feminine characters of some of the acknowledged masters of fiction. Now it is the fashion to assert that Scott has no capacity for character-drawing, and it is true that most of his heroes and heroines are mere abstractions; yet there is, after all, less of the accepted cant about women in his novels than in the works of some who are supposed to know better; the fact being that Scott was a chivalrous gentleman, with a noble simplicity of character that made him disdain to take for granted the qualities that the keen, subtleminded Thackeray was content to accept. Jeanie Deans, quite apart from the romantic circumstances of her story, is one of the most faithful de-

lineations of feminine character ever made by a man, and it is infinitely to Scott's credit that he has invested with undying interest a person who has so few of the stock attractions of her sex, so few of the conventional vices and virtues—in short, who is so utterly a woman as our honest, kindly, duty-loving Jeanie; nor are there many examples in fiction of such a consistent working out of a beautiful character to what is usually an uninteresting period of life. Jeanie is, no doubt, Scott's masterpiece, and he does not attain this level in any other character.

From Scott to Thackeray is a gigantic stride; we leap the gulf which separates the ancient from the modern novelist, for Scott is, psychologically, as distinctly behind his time as Thackeray is before his. It is perhaps a little late in the day to fall foul of Thackeray's women; every one acknowledges his injustice, his superficiality, his want of sympathetic insight; but we must have our ass's kick at him too. He is, to use an expressive provincialism, "a bit too clever." It is impossible to believe in the immortal Becky, to accept with patience Lady Castlewood, who is a mere embodiment of the list of virtues and vices mentioned above; one resents his patronage of Laura and his other favorites, whom he always despises, even while he praises them. "Don't you know any good women?" says Ethel Newcome to Pendennis; and, indeed, it is a question which might be addressed to Thackeray himself, and his answer should be, "Yes; but they are mostly fools." In fact, he does not know when to stop; his women are at once too consistent and not consistent enough; they have not the *qualités de leurs défauts*. Becky is, in Taine's words, "a petticoated and heartless barrister;" she is an impossibility—no woman's character is so one-sided. Thackeray has assimilated all the ready-made witticisms; he cannot help attributing spite and jealousy even to his beloved Laura; he is delighted to make her show a little "feminine weakness," and the way he gloats over

Stella's inability to forgive Vanessa is absolutely indecent, though this only comes in here to illustrate his point of view: it is supposed to belong to the realm of fact.

Dickens can hardly be regarded as a serious portrait-painter; his creatures are mere personifications of some one quality, and it is not worth while to quarrel with him about his wearisomely unselfish women, his pretty little foolish women, his proud, stern, unrelenting women; the story is, as it were, independent of the characters, or rather, one does not talk of the characters in a burlesque or melodrama.

Trollope seems to have gone out of fashion with the novel-reading public, yet he is often honest and original in his conceptions of women, and in one instance at least, that of Lily Dale, he rises far above the ordinary masculine standpoint, and shows us a woman whose noble steadfastness harmonizes so perfectly with her sweet tenderness that we can stand up and say to all the world, "This was a woman." At other times, it must be admitted, he allows his women to give way to a conventional tearfulness, and a sort of maudlin talk, which is the more irritating that he can do so much better when he likes.

Besant has written a great many books, but he only has one woman, and she is not a real one. She is beautiful, she is devoted to some good work, she always does the right thing—at least all the other people in the book think so—she leads about a lover who is generally her inferior in every way, and she is distinctly monotonous. This is not to be taken as underrating Besant as a novelist; it is merely an assertion that, in common with most of his sex, he does not give us any women among his characters.

The chief defect of William Black's women is that they always require an appreciative audience, and he always gives them one. They endure and inflict unnecessary suffering because, instead of using straightforwardness and common-sense, they insist on being

heroic and self-denying. In real life they would not be endured; some of them would even be called sulky; but Black almost orders us to admire everything they do because they do it. They are also devoid of humor, even the witty ones, but this is universal, being, in fact, a trait of the "eternal feminine."

In the novels of Marion Crawford, beautiful and sympathetic as many of his delineations are, there is perhaps a little too much of the instinctive, so to speak, the "wisest, virtuouslest, discreetest, best," because she does it, and apparently for no other reason very often; too much of the audience feeling; too much also of the feeling that unless she is very deeply in love there is nothing much for her to do. Yet we must praise him in that he grasps the inherent steadfastness and tenderness of his virtuous woman; here he is in the highest company and cannot err.

It is perhaps hardly fair to introduce the name of Rudyard Kipling into a list like this, since he has not definitely entered the ranks of the novelists, but one feels that a new note has been struck in the character of Maisie in "The Light that Failed;" her independence has a sort of reality very rare in fiction; it is unromantic, it is perhaps inartistic, but it is certainly true. One could not help trembling for her when she was fetched over to see poor, blind Dick; the author knew that she could not love him, being the girl she was, but he might have succumbed to the convention of "pity akin to love," and spoiled his story.

There are two great names in modern fiction which may not be omitted, though they must be mentioned with bated breath and whispering humbleness. We are taught to place implicit faith in Thomas Hardy and George Meredith as novelists of the first rank. With this question we are not at present concerned; our business is with the women of their novels. Let us say at once that Hardy's heroines drive one to vehement protest: they are repulsive; they are, if one can say so, ma-

terial; they are, in the worst sense, men's women; they have only one idea, or he has only one idea about them—namely, that they are of the feminine gender. This is, of course, flat heresy and the darkest Philistinism, but we are talking about *women*. Does not Mr. Hardy know any "nice" women? or is it only the "nasty" ones that are interesting? They must be beautiful, they must be sensual, they must be selfish. Have we got no further than this at the end of the "so-called nineteenth century," or is Mr. Hardy a reactionary? These strictures apply only to his heroines, by whom it is natural that we should judge an author; but it would be unfair to ignore the truth and beauty of some of his minor characters, especially in his earlier works: the figure of Marty, in "The Woodlanders," for instance, is drawn with a wonderful tenderness of feeling.

On the other hand, Meredith's women are actually women, and Meredith himself, as an enthusiastic admirer has declared, is the champion of the sex. He looks at women from another standpoint than that of the ordinary male observer; in short, he begins by "clearing his mind of cant," and this is, after all, what we are demanding; he is an artist, a poet; he goes to Nature and looks at her with candid eyes. Hence we get variety in his women, never monotony; the "eternal feminine" is there, but it exists side by side with clearly drawn individuality; he, better than any man, feels for the sufferings and limitations of the sex; he also, better than any other, realizes the capabilities which are hidden beneath the covering of what the world demands as the woman's stock-in-trade.

There is a certain largeness in his conceptions of women; none of his heroines exhibit the pettiness and meanness with which we have been so long regaled. He has been accused of depicting and applauding selfishness in women, but after all, perhaps, self-effacement is not our being's end and aim, and it is conceivable that the

ethics of the future may permit in women that development of individuality which is almost regarded as praiseworthy in man.

It is perhaps hardly in accordance with the tone of this paper to introduce a mention of Shakespeare's heroines, and it should only be done as one turns to Nature to corroborate one's impressions of the perfections or defects of a landscape painting. It is only necessary to glance for a moment at Desdemona, at Rosalind, at Imogen, at any of his seriously-drawn women, in order to feel the slightness, the superficiality, the tawdriness almost, of many of the accepted heroines, and it is this reflection more than any other that emboldens one to attack them. The more one studies these women, the more one is amazed at the range, the insight, the variety of his conceptions; and perhaps the most astounding thing is that he actually allows them quite a large supply of real, genuine humor, humor of so many kinds, too: broad fun, as in *Mistress Quickly*; keen, strong, intellectual high-spiritedness, as in *Beatrice*; daintiness, exuberant fancy, as in *Rosalind*; and with it all, so much spontaneity, "such letting Nature have her way," such an utter absence of the modern craze for that mere smartness which the writer often puts in the mouth of the most unlikely persons, that one feels transported into "an ampler ether, a diviner air," or, to use a hackneyed but always expressive simile, it is like the broad light of day after the sickly glare of lamplight. The tenderness of Shakespeare's women stands out against this healthy background with convincing power: *Rosalind* was really "many fathoms deep in love" with Orlando; *Portia's* "You see me, Lord Bassanio," is a speech impossible to a smaller and less wholesome character, and she meant every word of it.

But this is a fascinating subject, and likely to lead to prolixity, and besides, though the many swear by Shakespeare, it is the few who read him, and discussions on characters in books we

have not read are almost as boring as descriptions of countries we have not seen. The probability is that readers of the end of this century will go on putting up with the heroines to whom the male novelist has accustomed them, in the same way as our ancestors of the Middle Ages seem to have made no objection to the perspective of the kneeling saints in their stained-glass windows.

From Household Words.
WILL-MAKERS' WHIMS.

A hundred years ago, English lawyers, when dining together, used to drink to the health of "The School-master," for schoolmasters then often drew up wills for people, and by their ignorance of legal technicalities gave the gentleman of the long robe much remunerative business. "To the lawyers' best friend—the man who makes his own will," was also a regular toast at dinners of the Bar. Prosaic as most last wills and testaments are—save to fortunate legatees—there are many most amusing instances of eccentric bequests and peculiar disposals of property.

The admiration of our American cousins for their country is a prominent characteristic of their daily life, and some years ago a Mr. Sanborn desired that in death as in life his body should proclaim the glory of the Republic. He left a thousand pounds to the late Professor Agassiz, in return for which he was, by an extremely scientific process set forth in the will, to tan his—Sanborn's—skin into leather, and from it have a drum made. Two of the most suitable bones of his body were to be made into drumsticks, and with these a Mr. Warren Simpson—to whom Sanborn left the remainder of his property—was "on every seventeenth of June to repair to the foot of Bunker's Hill, and at sunrise beat on the drum, the parchment of which had been made out of the

testator's skin, the spirit-stirring strains of 'Yankee Doodle.'"

A somewhat similar bequest was made by a German in 1887. He died in Pittsburg, U. S. A., and by his will directed that his body should be cremated and the ashes forwarded to the German consul at New York, who was to deliver them over to the captain of the steamship "Elbe." When in mid-ocean the captain was to request a passenger to dress himself in nautical costume, and, ascending with the funeral urn to the top-mast, to scatter the ashes to the four winds of heaven. These strange directions were faithfully carried out. Quite as peculiar were the directions for the funeral of a Mr. John Underwood. He willed that he was to be buried in a green coffin with a copy of Horace under his head, and of Milton under his feet, a Greek Testament in his right hand, and a small Horace in his left. Six friends, who were not to wear mourning, were to follow him to the grave, and there to sing a verse of the twentieth ode of the second book of Horace. After this they were to "take a cheerful glass and think no more of John Underwood."

Wills may also be admitted as evidence of the mixed blessings of the matrimonial state. A nobleman wrote: "I give and bequeath to the worst of women, whom I unfortunately married, forty-five brass halfpence, which will buy her a pullet for supper." A Glasgow doctor, dying some ten years ago, left the whole of his estate to his two sisters; and then came this extraordinary clause: "To my wife, as a recompense for deserting me and leaving me in peace, I expect the said sister Elizabeth to make her a gift of ten shillings sterling, to buy her a pocket handkerchief to weep in after my decease." A Mr. Sydney Dickenson bequeathed to his wife the sum of sixty thousand pounds, "on condition that she undertakes to pass two hours a day at my graveside, for the ten years following my decease, in company with her sister, whom I have reason to know she loathes worse than she does

me." Another husband stated that he would have left his widow ten thousand pounds, if she had allowed him to read his evening newspaper in peace; but, as she always commenced playing and singing when he started to read, he left her only a thousand pounds. Such instances could be multiplied indefinitely, but one other is worthy of note. A husband left his wife twelve thousand pounds, to be increased to twenty-four thousand pounds provided that she wore a widow's cap after his death. She accepted the larger amount, wore the cap for six months, and then put it off. A law-suit followed; but the judge held that the testator should have inserted the word "always," and gave judgment in favor of the widow, who, the day after, re-entered the state of matrimony. Thus the husband's little plan for preventing his widow marrying again failed. Husbands, it appears, can prevent their wives marrying again, but wives cannot so hamper their husbands.

The malevolence of some men is manifested in their death, as well as life. What could exceed the cruelty of a father who left his daughter thirty thousand pounds under the following conditions: "Should my daughter marry, and be afflicted with children, the trustees are to pay out of the said legacy two thousand pounds, on the birth of the first child, to the — Hospital; four thousand pounds, on the second; six thousand pounds, on the third; and an additional two thousand pounds on the birth of each fresh child, till the thirty thousand pounds is exhausted. Should any portion of this sum be left at the end of twenty years, the balance is to be paid to her, to use as she thinks fit."

A Mr. Henry Budd died in 1862, leaving considerable property behind. It was to be divided equally among his sons, and held by them as long as they wore no moustaches. Should one of them cease to shave his top lip, his share would be forfeited. This condition is easy indeed compared with that laid down by a Derby gentleman. He

left his property to his eldest son on condition that he never used tobacco in any shape or form. If he broke this condition the property was to be divided among his brothers and sisters, and as they numbered six, there was little chance of his ever indulging in the fragrant weed, save at the cost of his legacy. A year or two ago a Russian gentleman living at Odessa bequeathed four million roubles to his four nieces, but they were to receive the money only after having worked for a year as washerwomen, chambermaids or farm-servants. These conditions were carried out, and while occupying such humble positions, it is satisfactory to learn that they received over eight hundred and sixty offers of marriage.

Humaneness to animals is much more common than humanity to man, and scores of people have left large sums to their pets. In 1895 Miss Charlotte Rosa Raine bequeathed her "dear old white puss Titlens and pussess tabby Rolla, tabby Jennifee and black and white Ursula to Ann Elizabeth Matthews," directing her executors to pay her twelve pounds a year for the maintenance of each cat so long as it should live. Her long-haired white puss Louise, and her black and white puss Doctor Clausman, she gave to her handmaid, Elizabeth Willoughby, and her black ebony and white Oscar to Miss Lavina Beck; and her executors were directed to pay them twelve pounds per annum for the maintenance of each cat. The rest of her cats—how many had Miss Raine?—she left "to the aforesaid Ann Elizabeth Matthews, to whom one hundred and fifty pounds per annum shall be paid for their maintenance as long as any do live, but such annuity does not apply to kittens born of them."

Another eccentric old lady left a few trifling amounts to her relatives, but five hundred pounds a year to be held in trust for her parrot, with five hundred pounds for a new cage for Polly. Another old maid left one hundred pounds a year for the keep of her parrot, which was to be produced twice a

year, "to prove that the person tending it had not wrung its neck."

One lady left seventy pounds a year for the maintenance of three goldfish, which were to be identified as follows: "One is bigger than the other two, and these latter are to be easily recognized, as one is fat and the other lean. If the fish, on quarter-day, are found to be of this description, the money is to be paid; if not, it is to be expended on flowers, which are to be placed on the graves of the goldfish after death."

In 1892 a Paris lady left ten thousand francs to her cat. On its death, the money was to be spent on elementary schools. The death of the cat last year caused the money to revert to the district governing body for this purpose.

An old bachelor, on dying, left the whole of his property to three ladies to whom he had proposed marriage, and who had refused him. The reason of this bequest was that by their refusal, "to them I owe all my earthly happiness."

It is not surprising that lawyers grow wealthy over wills when a gentleman bequeaths five hundred pounds "to that amiable young lady, Miss Blank, who smiles so sweetly in the street when we meet." Now, in the Blank family there were six sisters; they all claimed to be "the amiable young lady," but which of them got the legacy, history sayeth not.

To dispose of one's worldly goods in poetry is as incongruous as digging with a jewelled spade. Still, several examples of rhymed wills exist. A solicitor—of all people in the world!—wrote:—

As to all my worldly goods, now or to be
in store,

I give them to my beloved wife, and hers
for evermore.

I give all freely; I no limit fix;

This is my will, and she's executrix.

But the most curious will which the writer has ever come across is that of M. Zalesky, a Polish landlord, who died in 1889 leaving property valued at

a hundred thousand roubles. His will was enclosed in an envelope, bearing the words, "To be opened after my death." Inside this was another envelope, "To be opened six weeks after my death." When this time had passed, the second envelope was opened and a third uncovered, "To be opened one year after my death." At the end of the year a fourth envelope was discovered, to be opened two years after the testator's death; and so the game went on until 1894, when the actual will was discovered and read. It was quite as eccentric in its dispositions as the directions attached to its opening. The testator bequeathed half his fortune to such of his heirs as had the largest number of children; the rest of the property was to be placed in a bank, and a hundred years after his death to be divided, with the accumulated interest, among the will-maker's descendants. Thus by 1989, at five per cent. compound interest, the fifty thousand roubles will have swelled into over six million roubles; but what will this be among so many descendants?

No more than the layman can the lawyer be trusted to make his own will. Lord St. Leonards, one of the most distinguished lord chancellors of the century, made his own will, and over it a long and costly litigation ensued. Lord Mansfield also made his own will, but it was far from being in regular form, though it proved valid. Sir Joseph Jekyll was noted as a lawyer; but having no heirs, he left the whole of his estate to pay off the national debt. "Sir Joseph Jekyll," said Lord Mansfield, "might as well have attempted to stop the arch of Blackfriars Bridge with his full-bottomed wig," and the will was set aside on the ground of imbecility.

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THE "CABINETABLE" MAN.

For a few hours, or even a few days longer, all eyes are turned on the "cab-

inetable" man. This awkward term, as all know, defines a small class of men, to whom, at certain crises, a certain amount of attention is directed. The "cabinetable" man is he who could, at need, become part of a government without arousing too much scandal. His entrance on the stage coincides exactly with the exit of the previous ministry.

Certain friends have put his name on the lists which are passing from hand to hand. Certain journals mention the fact to their readers. He himself stands waiting, subdued and proper but anxious. Will they end by asking his aid? The hours are passing. The great personage who had undertaken to form a ministry has not yet come knocking at his door. The ministry is formed without him: he has got to begin all over again! Once more he stands and waits. It is the lot of some to wait forever. Ministries, like Academies, have their perpetual candidates. After a while, public opinion hardly differentiates them from their more fortunate rivals. Those who have been ministers and those who might have been—we blend them in the same vague memory and view them with the same indifference.

Or, perhaps the cabinetable man is approached. If he followed his instincts he would throw himself into the arms of the kind gentleman who has given him a chance to burst his chrysalis. But we must beware of following our instincts. So, instead, therefore, he swells out his chest, puts on an air of proud importance, and pretends to think that his collaboration is worth paying for. What a farce!

When asked to make his choice between different portfolios, how difficult he finds it to do so! He has no preference because he has no special aptitudes. If he is vaguely fond of the things of the mind, he will accept—under pressure—public instruction. A needy lawyer or all but bankrupt merchant will rather choose justice or commerce.

He has no special line; neither has he a general programme. When in power,

he often abandons the theories which of late he firmly upheld, that is, when there was no question of applying them. Among his colleagues, some hold political views directly opposed to his own. When squalls arise, and the ship of State seems to him likely to sink, he will make haste to leave it so as not to compromise his future chances. But he will be as cabinetable after the catastrophe as he was before.

Take note, furthermore, that the number of persons who can be called upon to accept a given portfolio is distinctly limited. At each new crisis the names which come up are pretty much the same. So those who, while feeling no desire to take part in the comedy, yet watch it with interest are beginning to ask themselves a question, to which, for my part, I confess I see no answer. What are the essential qualifications of a ministerial candidate? We are making no mistake about the importance of an office which has lost much of its prestige. But everybody likes to understand things. A minister is after all a man who can do a little more harm than the average deputy. For what reasons is he chosen rather than another?

A cabinetable man is not necessarily well-known. There are some, the sound of whose names doesn't awake the faintest echo in our minds. He is subject to no age-limitation. Mere babies have sometimes been placed at the head of departments and have not done appreciably worse than their elders. Tact and address are not requisites, for we have seen perfect dunderheads on the ministerial bench. There is no call for eloquence or even that "gift of the gab" which enables a man to talk fluently when he is completely ignorant of the subject under discussion. Then what is it? The longer you seek for a definition of this misleading term, the less sure you are of its meaning. All the same, it must mean something to be cabinetable, because the term is capable of comparison, and some men are more cabinetable than others. These become presidents of councils. But what can it imply? We know

what it takes to make an apothecary; a postman has to furnish certain testimonials; but nobody knows what differentiates the mediocrity of to-morrow's cabinet officer from the mediocrity of all his colleagues.

Nevertheless, accustomed as we are

to the irony of things, it still surprises us that in a country where there are so many people doing good and honest work the highest offices should be given to those least qualified to fill them.

RENE DOUMIC.

Translated for The Living Age.

Telegraphing in Spain.—The Spanish ceremonies which accompany the handing in of a telegram would be amusing were they not so irksome and time-killing. You approach a little window in the one office in the city, and, when your turn comes, hand in your message. The clerk counts the words a couple of times over, adds up the result of each page, refers to the written tariff and finds out what the cost is in francs. Then he takes another slip of paper, finds out what the rate of exchange is at the moment, and reduces the francs to Spanish pesetas. Finally he reads out the result—say, 597 pesetas 35 centimes. You engrave these figures in your memory, and, leaving the hall, go out to another window in a passage outside, and there await your turn, repeating always the number 597.35 till the clerk asks you what you want. Then you explain that you are come to purchase Spanish stamps for the sum of 597 pesetas and 35 centimes, and you take out a note for 1,000 pesetas. The passage is dark on the brightest day, and you accept the stamps and your change in a spirit of true religious faith, for you see not even darkly as in a glass. When you return to the inner sanctuary and help to make *queue*, awaiting your turn again, the chances are that you find yourself short of stamps, in consequence of a mistake on the part of the clerk outside. This happened twice to me, but I am bound to say the individual discovered and rectified his error, so that my only loss was of about thirty-five minutes more.

But the most curious thing of all is

the process of recovering your money if the telegram be suppressed. There is no way of obtaining it speedily. You must wait. Messages of mine to the value of several hundred pesetas were stopped, and I called at the office for the money. In Russia, Germany, Turkey, Austria—everywhere, in fact—the money paid is refunded at once. But not so in Spain. Here you have to make various pilgrimages, from post to pillar, interviewing officials, dignitaries, clerks, porters. All shake their heads, shrug their shoulders, purse their lips, and assure you that the government allows them no special funds for the purpose. "Yes, but if you do not forward my message, for which I paid you in advance, you have no right to keep my money." "Oh, no! of course not. We are not to blame, you know. You had better see our chief. He is very busy now, but if you call to-morrow, I am sure you can see him."

I spent four days journeying from chief to subordinate, and from subordinate to chief, and at last I received the following satisfactory promise: "If you will write a petition to the Chief of the Telegraph, asking that the money be refunded you for the suppressed messages, he will deal with it in due time." "What is due time?" I venture to inquire. "Well, we cannot promise anything," said my informant, Señor Perez, "except that, when the funds allow it, you shall have your money back." "But could you, perhaps, say approximately when?" He could not, but another official could, and did—"Any time between two and four months!"

